



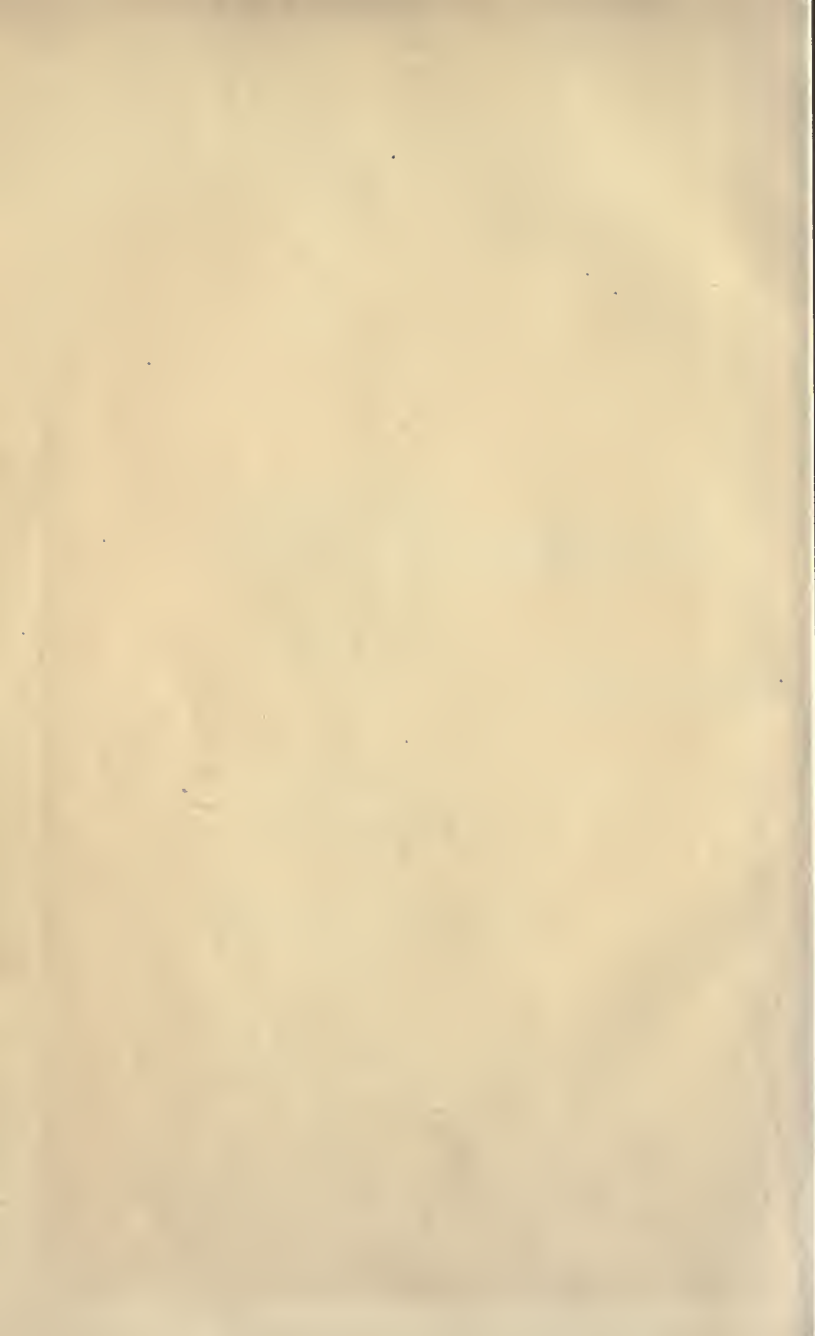


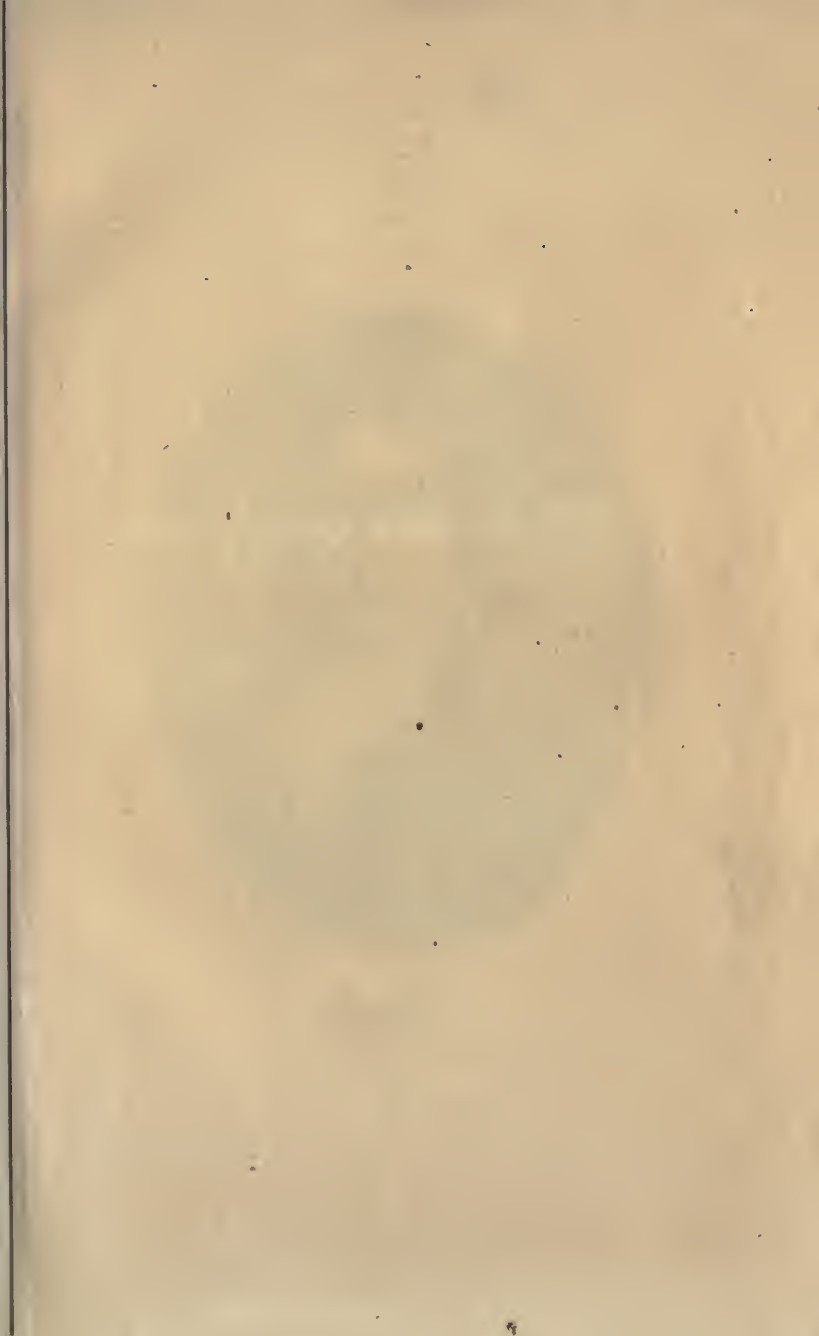
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*D. Owens, Esq.*

From George to his Mother.

Christmas 1889.







JOHN MILTON.

*THE*  
Maiden & Married Life  
OF  
MARY POWELL,  
*Afterwards Mistress Milton.*



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*THE*  
Maiden and Married Life  
OF  
MARY POWELL,  
*Afterwards Mistress Milton.*

JOURNALL.

*Forest Hill, Oxon, May 1st, 1643.*

\* \* \* \* \*

A Gypsie Woman at the Gate woulde faine have tolde my Fortune; but *Mother* chased her away, saying she had doubtlesse harboured in some of the low houses in *Oxford*, and mighte bring us the Plague. Could have cried for Vexation; she had promised to tell me the Colour of my Husband's Eyes; but  
*Mother*

1643.

May 1st.

1643.

*Mother* says she believes I shall never have one, I am soe sillie. *Father* gave me a gold Piece. Dear *Mother* is chafed, methinks, touching this Debt of five hundred Pounds, which *Father* says he knows not how to pay. Indeed, he sayd, overnichte, his whole personal Estate amounts to but five hundred Pounds, his Timber and Wood to four hundred more, or thereabouts; and the Tithes and Messuages of *Whateley* are no great Matter, being mortgaged for about as much more, and he hath lent Sights of Money to them that won't pay, so 'tis hard to be thus prest. Poor *Father*! 'twas good of him to give me this gold Piece.

May 2nd.

Cousin *Rose* married to Master *Roger Agnew*. Present, *Father*, *Mother*, and *Brother* of *Rose*; *Father*, *Mother*, *Dick*, *Bob*, *Harry*, and I; Squire *Paice* and his Daughter *Audrey*; an olde Aunt of Master *Roger's*, and one of his Cousins,

a stiffe-backed Man with large Eares, and such a long Nose! Cousin *Rose* looked bewtifulle—pitie so faire a Girl should marry so olde a Man—'tis thoughte he wants not manie Years of fifty.

1643.

New Misfortunes in the Poultrie Yarde. Poor *Mother's* Loyalty cannot stand the Demands for her best Chickens, Ducklings, &c., for the Use of his Majesty's Officers since the King hath beene in *Oxford*. She accuseth my *Father* of having beene wonne over by a few faire Speeches to be more of a Royalist than his natural Temper inclineth him to; which, of course, he will not admit.

May 7th.

Whole Day taken up in a Visit to *Rose*, now a Week married, and growne quite matronlie already. We reached *Sheepscote* about an Hour before Noone. A long, broade, strait Walke of green Turf,

May 8th.

1643.

Turf, planted with Hollyoaks, Sunflowers, &c., and some earlier Flowers alreadie in Bloom, led up to the rusticall Porch of a truly farm-like House, with low gable Roofs, a long lattice Window on either Side the Doore, and three Casements above. Such, and no more, is *Rose's* House! But she is happy, for she came running forthe, soe soone as she hearde *Clover's* Feet, and helped me from my Saddle all smiling, tho' she had not expected to see us. We had Curds and Creame; and she wished it were the Time of Strawberries, for she sayd they had large Beds; and then my *Father* and the Boys went forthe to looke for Master *Agnew*. Then *Rose* took me up to her Chamber, singing as she went; and the long, low Room was sweet with Flowers. Sayd I, "*Rose*, to  
"be Mistress of this pretty Cottage,  
" 'twere hardlie amisse to marry a Man  
" as olde as Master *Roger*." "Olde!"  
quoth she, "deare *Moll*, you must not  
" deeme

“deeme him olde ; why, he is but forty-  
 “two ; and am not I twenty-three ?”  
 She lookt soe earneste and hurte, that I  
 coulde not but falle a laughing.

*Mother gone to Sandford.* She hopes  
 to get Uncle *John* to lend *Father* this  
 Money. *Father* says she may try. 'Tis  
 harde to discourage her with an ironi-  
 calle Smile, when she is doing alle she  
 can, and more than manie Women  
 woulde, to help *Father* in his Difficultie ;  
 but suche, she sayth somewhat bitterlie,  
 is the Lot of our Sex. She bade *Father*  
 mind that she had brought him three  
 thousand Pounds, and askt what had  
 come of them. Answered ; helped to fille  
 the Mouths of nine healthy Children,  
 and stop the Mouth of an easie Hus-  
 band ; soe, with a Kiss, made it up. I  
 have the Keys, and am left Mistresse of  
 alle, to my great Contentment ; but the  
 Children clamour for Sweetmeats, and  
*Father* sayth, “Remember, *Moll*, Dis-  
 cretion is the better Part of Valour.”

After

1643.

May 9th.

1643.

After *Mother* had left, went into the Paddock, to feed the Colts with bread ; and while they were putting their Noses into *Robin's* Pockets, *Dick* brought out the two Ponies, and set me on one of them, and we had a mad Scamper through the Meadows, and down the Lanes ; I leading. Just at the Turne of *Holford's Close*, came shorte upon a Gentleman walking under the Hedge, clad in a sober, genteel Suit, and of most beautifulle Countenance, with Hair like a Woman's, of a lovely pale brown, long and silky, falling over his Shoulders. I nearlie went over him, for *Clover's* hard Forehead knocked agaynst his Chest ; but he stode it like a Rock ; and lookinge firste at me and then at *Dick*, he smiled and spoke to my Brother, who seemed to know him, and turned about and walked by us, sometimes stroaking *Clover's* shaggy Mane. I felte a little ashamed ; for *Dick* had sett me on the Poney just as I was, my Gown somewhat

what too shorte for riding: however, I drewe up my Feet and let *Clover* nibble a little Grasse, and then got rounde to the neare Side, our new Companion stille between us. He offered me some wild Flowers, and askt me their Names; and when I tolde them, he sayd I knew more than he did, though he accounted himselfe a prettie fayre Botaniste: and we went on thus, talking of the Herbs and Simples in the Hedges; and I sayd how prettie some of their Names were, and that, methought, though Adam had named alle the Animals in Paradise, perhaps Eve had named alle the Flowers. He lookt earnestlie at me, on this, and muttered "prettie." Then *Dick* askt of him News from *London*, and he spoke, methought, reservedlie; ever and anon turning his bright, thoughtfulle Eyes on me. At length, we parted at the Turn of the Lane.

I askt *Dick* who he was, and he told me he was one Mr. *John Milton*, the  
Party

1643.

Party to whom *Father* owed five hundred Pounds. He was the Sonne of a *Buckinghamshire* Gentleman, he added, well connected, and very scholaric, but affected towards the Parliament. His Grandsire, a zealous Papiste, formerly lived in *Oxon*, and disinherited the *Father* of this Gentleman for abjuring the *Romish* Faith.

When I found how faire a Gentleman was *Father's* Creditor, I became the more interested in deare *Mother's* Successe.

May 13th.

*Dick* began to harpe on another Ride to *Sheepscote* this Morning, and persuaded *Father* to let him have the bay Mare, soe he and I started at aboute Ten o' the Clock. Arrived at Master *Agnew's* Doore, found it open, no one in Parlour or Studdy; soe *Dick* tooke the Horses rounde, and then we went strait thro' the House, into the Garden behind, which is on a rising Ground,  
with



with pleached Alleys and turfen Walks, and a Peep of the Church through the Trees. A Lad tolde us his Mistress was with the Bees, soe we walked towards the Hives; and, from an Arbour hard by, hearde a Murmur, though not of Bees, issuing. In this rusticall Bowre, found *Roger Agnew* reading to *Rose* and to *Mr. Milton*. Thereupon ensued manie cheerful Salutations, and *Rose* proposed returning to the House, but Master *Agnew* sayd it was pleasanter in the Bowre, where was Room for alle; soe then *Rose* offered to take me to her Chamber to lay aside my Hoode, and promised to send a Junkett into the Arbour; whereon *Mr. Agnew* smiled at *Mr. Milton*, and sayd somewhat of "neat-handed *Phillis*."

As we went alonge, I tolde *Rose* I had seene her Guest once before, and thought him a comely, pleasant Gentleman. She laught, and sayed, "Pleasant? why, he is one of the greatest  
"Scholars

1643.

“Scholars of our Time, and knows more  
“Languages than you or I ever hearde  
“of!” I made Answer, “That may be,  
“and yet might not ensure his being  
“pleasant, but rather the contrary, for I  
“cannot reade *Greeke* and *Latin*, *Rose*,  
“like you.” Quoth *Rose*, “But you can  
“reade *English*, and he hath writ some  
“of the loveliest *English* Verses you  
“ever hearde, and hath brought us a  
“new Composure this Morning, which  
“*Roger*, being his olde Colledge Friend,  
“was discussing with him, to my greate  
“Pleasure, when you came. After we  
“have eaten the Junkett, he shall be-  
“ginne it again.” “By no means,”  
said I, “for I love Talking more than  
“Reading.” However, it was not soe  
to be, for *Rose* woulde not be foyled;  
and as it woulde not have been good  
Manners to decline the Hearinge in  
Presence of the Poet, I was constrayned  
to suppressse a secret yawne, and feign  
Attention, though, Truth to say, it soone  
wandered;

wandered; and, during the last halfe Hour, I sat in a compleat Dreame, tho' not unpleasant one. *Roger* having made an End, 'twas diverting to heare him commending the Piece unto the Author, who as gravely accepted it; yet, with Nothing fullesome about the one, or misproud about the other. Indeed, there was a sedate Sweetnesse in the Poet's Wordes as well as Lookes; and shortlie, waiving the Discussion of his owne Composures, he began to talke of those of other Men, as *Shakspeare*, *Spencer*, *Cowley*, *Ben Jonson*, and of *Tasso*, and *Tasso's* Friend the Marquis of *Villa*, whome, it appeared, Mr. *Milton* had Knowledge of in *Italy*. Then he askt me, woulde I not willingly have seene the Country of *Romeo* and *Juliet*, and prest to know whether I loved Poetry; but finding me loath to tell, sayd he doubted not I preferred Romances, and that he had read manie, and loved them dearly too. I sayd, I  
loved

1643.

1643.

loved *Shakspeare's* Plays better than *Sidney's* *Arcadia*; on which he cried "Righte," and drew nearer to me, and woulde have talked at greater length; but, knowing from *Rose* how learned he was, I feared to shew him I was a sillie Foole; soe, like a sillie Foole, held my Tongue.

Dinner; Eggs, Bacon, roast Ribs of Lamb, Spinach, Potatoes, savoury Pie, a *Brentford* Pudding, and Cheese-cakes. What a pretty Housewife *Rose* is! *Roger's* plain Hospitalitie and scholaric Discourse appeared to much Advantage. He askt of News from *Paris*; and Mr. *Milton* spoke much of the *Swedish* Ambassadour, *Dutch* by Birth; a Man renowned for his Learning, Magnanimity, and Misfortunes, of whome he had seene much. He tolde *Rose* and me how this Mister *Van der Groote* had beene unjustlie caste into Prison by his Countrymen; and how his good Wife had shared his Captivitie, and had tried to get his Sentence

Sentence reversed; failing which, she contrived his Escape in a big Chest, which she pretended to be full of heavie olde Bookes. Mr. *Milton* concluded with the Exclamation, "Indeede, there " never was such a Woman;" on which, deare *Roger*, whome I beginne to love, quoth, "Oh yes, there are manie such, " —we have two at Table now." Whereat, Mr. *Milton* smiled.

1643.

At Leave-taking pressed Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* to come and see us soone; and *Dick* askt Mr. *Milton* to see the Bowling Greene.

Ride Home, delightfulle.

Thought, when I woke this Morning, I had been dreaminge of St. *Paul* let down the Wall in a basket; but founde, on more closely examining the Matter, 'twas *Grotius* carried down the Ladder in a Chest; and methought I was his Wife, leaninge from the Window above, and crying to the Souldiers, "Have a  
" Care,

May 14th.

1643.

“Care, have a Care!” ’Tis certayn I should have betraied him by an Over-anxietie.

Resolved to give *Father* a *Sheeps-cote* Dinner, but *Margery* affirmed the Haunch woulde no longer keepe, so was forced to have it drest, though meaninge to have kept it for Companie. Little *Kate*, who had been out alle the Morning, came in with her Lap full of Butterburs, the which I was glad to see, as *Mother* esteemes them a sovereign Remedie ’gainst the Plague, which is like to be rife in *Oxford* this Summer, the Citie being so overcrowded on account of his Majestie. While laying them out on the Stille-room floor, in bursts *Robin* to say Mr. *Agnew* and Mr. *Milton* were with *Father* at the Bowling Greene, and woulde dine here. Soe was glad *Margery* had put down the Haunch. ’Twas past One o’ the Clock, however, before it coulde be sett on Table; and I had just run up to pin on my Carnation  
tion

tion Knots, when I hearde them alle come in discoursing merrilie.

1643.

At Dinner Mr. *Milton* askt *Robin* of his Studdies; and I was in Payne for the deare Boy, knowing him to be better affected to his out-doore Recreations than to his Booke; but he answered boldlie he was in *Ovid*, and I lookt in Mr. *Milton's* Face to guesse was that goode Scholarship or no; but he turned it towards my *Father*, and sayd he was trying an Experiment on two young Nephews of his owne, whether the reading those Authors that treat of physical Subjects mighte not advantage them more than the Poets; whereat my *Father* jested with him, he being himselfe one of the Fraternitie he seemed to despise. But he upheld his Argument so bravellie, that *Father* listened in earnest Silence. Meantime, the Cloth being drawne, and I in Feare of remaining over long, was avised to withdrawe my selfe earlie, *Robin* following, and begging

1643.

ging me to goe downe to the Fish-ponds. Afterwards alle the others joyned us, and we sate on the Steps till the Sun went down, when, the Horses being broughte round, our Guests tooke Leave without returning to the House. *Father* walked thoughtfullie Home with me, leaning on my Shoulder, and spake little.

May 15th.

After writing the above last Night, in my Chamber, went to Bed and had a most heavenlie Dreame. Methoughte it was brighte, brighte Moonlighte, and I was walking with Mr. *Milton* on a Terrace,—not *our* Terrace, but in some outlandish Place; and it had Flights and Flights of green marble Steps, descending, I cannot tell how farre, with stone Figures and Vases on everie one. We went downe and downe these Steps, till we came to a faire Piece of Water, still in the Moonlighte; and then, methoughte, he woulde be taking Leave, and sayd much about Absence and Sor-  
rowe,



rowe, as tho' we had knowne eache other some Space; and alle that he sayd was delightfulle to heare. Of a suddain we hearde Cries, as of Distresse, in a Wood that came quite down to the Water's Edge, and Mr. *Milton* sayd, "Hearken!" and then, "There is some one being "slaine in the Woode, I must goe to "rescue him;" and soe, drewe his Sword and ran off. Meanwhile, the Cries continued, but I did not seeme to mind them much; and, looking stedfastlie downe into the clear Water, could see to an immeasurable Depth, and beheld, oh, rare! Girls sitting on glistening Rocks, far downe beneathe, combing and braiding their brighte Hair, and talking and laughing, onlie I could not hear aboute what. And their Kirtles were like spun Glass, and their Bracelets Coral and Pearl; and I thought it the fairest Sight that Eyes could see. But, alle at once, the Cries in the Wood affrighted them, for they started, looked  
upwards

1643.

upwards and alle aboute, and began swimming thro' the cleare Water so fast, that it became troubled and thick, and I coulde see them noe more. Then I was aware that the Voices in the Wood were of *Dick* and *Harry* calling for *me*; and I soughte to answeare, "Here!" but my Tongue was heavie. Then I commenced running towards them, through ever so manie greene Paths, in the Wood; but still, we coulde never meet; and I began to see grinning Faces, neither of Man nor Beaste, peeping at me through the Trees; and one and another of them called me by Name; and in greate Feare and Paine I awoke!

\* \* \* \* Strange Things are Dreames! Dear *Mother* thinks much of them, and sayth they oft portend coming Events. My *Father* holdeth the opinion that they are rather made up of what hath already come to passe; but surelie naught like this Dreame of  
mine

mine hath in anie Part befallen me  
hithertoe ?

1643.

\* \* \* \* What strange Fable or  
Masque were they reading that Day at  
*Sheepscote* ? I mind not.

Too much busied of late to write,  
though much hath happened which I  
woulde fain remember. Dined at *Shot-*  
*over* yesterday. Met *Mother*, who is  
coming Home in a Day or two, but  
helde short Speech with me aside  
concerning Housewifery. The *Agnews*  
there, of course: alsoe Mr. *Milton*,  
whom we have seene continuallie,  
lately; and I know not how it should  
be, but he seemeth to like me. *Father*  
affects him much, but *Mother* loveth  
him not. She hath seen little of him:  
perhaps the less the better. *Ralphe*  
*Hewlett*, as usuall, forward in his rough  
Endeavours to please; but, though no  
Scholar, I have yet Sense enough to  
prefer Mr. *Milton's* Discourse to his.

May 20th.

1643.

\* \* \* \* I wish I were fonder of Studdy; but, since it cannot be, what need to vex? Some are born of one Mind, some of another. *Rose* was alwaies for her Booke; and, had *Rose* beene no Scholar, Mr. *Agnew* woulde, may be, never have given her a second Thought: but alle are not of the same Way of thinking.

\* \* \* \* A few lines received from *Mother's* "spoilt Boy," as *Father* hath called Brother *Bill*, ever since he went a soldiering. Blurred and misspelt as they are, she will prize them. Trulie, we are none of us grate Hands at the Pen; 'tis well I make this my Copie-booke.

May 22nd.

\* \* \* \* Oh, strange Event! Can this be Happinesse? Why, then, am I soe feared, soe mazed, soe prone to Weeping? I woulde that *Mother* were here. *Lord*, have Mercie on me a sinfull, sillie Girl, and guide my steps arighte.

It

\* \* \* \* It seemes like a Dreame,  
(I have done noughte but dreame of  
late, I think,) my going along the  
matted Passage, and hearing Voices in  
my *Father's* Chamber, just as my Hand  
was on the Latch; and my withdrawing  
my Hand, and going softlie away, though  
I never paused at disturbing him before;  
and, after I had been a full Houre in the  
Stille Room, turning over ever soe manie  
Trays full of dried Herbs and Flower-  
leaves, hearing him come forthe and  
call, "*Moll*, deare *Moll*, where are you?"  
with I know not what of strange in the  
Tone of his Voice; and my running to  
him hastilie, and his drawing me into  
his Chamber, and closing the Doore.  
Then he takes me round the Waiste,  
and remains quite silent awhile; I gaz-  
ing on him so strangelie! and at length,  
he says with a Kind of Sigh, "Thou art  
"indeed but young yet! scarce eighteen,  
"—and fresh, as Mr. *Milton* says, as  
"the earlie May; too tender, forsooth,  
" to

1643.

“to leave us yet, sweet Child! But  
 “what wilt say, *Moll*, when I tell thee  
 “that a well-esteemed Gentleman,  
 “whom as yet indeed I know too little  
 “of, hath craved of me Access to the  
 “House, as one that woulde win your  
 “Favour?”

Thereupon, such a suddain Faintness of the Spiritts overtooke me, (a thing I am noe way subject to,) as that I fell down in a Swound at *Father's* Feet; and when I came to myselfe agayn, my Hands and Feet seemed full of Prickles, and there was a Humming as of *Rose's* Bees, in mine Ears. *Lettice* and *Margery* were tending of me, and *Father* watching me full of Care; but soe soone as he saw me open mine Eyes, he bade the Maids stand aside, and sayd, stooping over me, “Enough, deare *Moll*; we will “talk noe more of this at present.” “Onlie just tell me,” quoth I, in a Whisper, “who it is.” “Guesse,” sayd he. “I cannot,” I softlie replied; and, with

with the Lie, came such a Rush of Blood to my Cheeks as betraied me. "I am "sure you have, though," sayd deare *Father*, gravelie, "and I neede not say "it is Mr. *Milton*, of whome I know "little more than you doe, and that is "not enough. On the other Hand, "*Roger Agnew* sayth that he is one of "whome we can never know too much, "and there is somewhat about him "which inclines me to believe it." "What will *Mother* say?" interrupted I. Thereat *Father's* Countenance changed; and he hastilie answered, "Whatever she likes: I have an An- "swer for her, and a Question too;" and abruptlie left me, bidding me keep myselfe quiet.

But can I? Oh, no! *Father* hath sett a Stone rolling, unwitting of its Course. It hath prostrated me in the first Instance, and will, I misdoubt, hurt my *Mother*. *Father* is bold enow in her Absence, but when she comes  
back

1643.

back will leave me to face her Anger alone ; or else, make such a Stir to shew that he is not governed by a Woman, as wille make Things worse. Meanwhile, how woulde I have them ? Am I most pleased or payned ? dismayed or flattered ? Indeed, I know not.

\* \* \* \* I am soe sorry to have swooned. Needed I have done it, merelie to heare there was one who soughte my Favour ? Aye, but one so wise ! so thoughtfulle ! so unlike me !

*Bedtime ; same Daye.*

\* \* \* \* Who knoweth what a Daye will bring forth ? After writing the above, I sate like one stupid, ruminating on I know not what, except on the Unlikelihood that one soe wise would trouble himself to *seeke* for aught and yet fail to *win*. After abiding a long Space in mine owne Chamber, alle below seeming still, I began to wonder shoulde we dine alone or not, and to have a hundred



dred hot and cold Fitts of Hope and Feare. Thought I, if Mr. *Milton* comes, assuredlie I cannot goe down; but yet I must; but yet I will not; but yet the best will be to conduct myselfe as though Nothing had happened; and, as he seems to have left the House long ago, maybe he hath returned to *Sheepscote*, or even to *London*. Oh that *London*! Shall I indeede ever see it? and the rare Shops, and the Play-houses, and *Paul's* and the *Towre*? But what and if that ever comes to pass? Must I leave home? dear *Forest Hill*? and *Father* and *Mother*, and the Boys? more especiallie *Robin*? Ah! but *Father* will give me a long Time to think of it. He will, and must.

Then Dinner-time came; and, with Dinner-time, Uncle *Hewlett* and *Ralph*, Squire *Paice* and Mr. *Milton*. We had a huge Sirloin, soe no Feare of short Commons. I was not ill pleased to see soe manie: it gave me an Excuse for holding my Peace, but I coulde have  
wished

1643.

wished for another Woman. However, *Father* never thinks of that, and *Mother* will soone be Home. After Dinner the elder Men went to the Bowling-greene with *Dick* and *Ralph*; the Boys to the Fish-ponds; and, or ever I was aware, Mr. *Milton* was walking with me on the Terrace. My Dreame came soe forcibly to Mind, that my Heart seemed to leap into my Mouth; but he kept away from the Fish-ponds, and from Leave-taking, and from his morning Discourse with my *Father*,—at least for awhile; but some way he got round to it, and sayd soe much, and soe well, that, after alle my *Father's* bidding me keepe quiete and take my Time, and mine owne Resolution to think much and long, he never rested till he had changed the whole Appearance of Things, and made me promise to be his, wholly and trulie,—and oh! I feare I have been too quickly wonne.

*May*

*May 23rd.* At leaste, so sayeth the Calendar; but with me it hath beene trulie an *April* Daye, alle Smiles and Teares. And now my Spiritts are soe perturbed and dismaid, as that I know not whether to weepe or no, for methinks crying would relieve me. At first waking this Morning my Mind was elated at the Falsitie of my *Mother's* Notion, that no man of Sense woulde think me worth the having: and soe I got up too proude, I think, and came down too vain, for I had spent an unusuall Time at the Glasse. My Spiritts, alsoe, were soe unequall, that the Boys took Notice of it, and it seemed as though I coulde breathe nowhere but out of Doors; so the Children and I had a rare Game of Play in the Home-close; but ever and anon I kept looking towards the Road and listening for Horses' Feet, till *Robin* sayd, "One would think the *King* was "coming:" but at last came Mr. *Milton*, quite another Way, walking through the  
Fields

1643.  
April 23rd.

1643.

Fields with huge Strides. *Kate* saw him  
 firste, and tolde me; and then sayd,  
 "What makes you look soe pale?"

\* \* \* \* \*

We sate a good Space under the Hawthorn Hedge on the Brow of the Hill, listening to the Mower's Scythe, and the Song of Birds, which seemed enough for him, without talking; and as he spake not, I helde my Peace, till, with the Sun in my Eyes, I was like to drop asleep; which, as his own Face was *from* me, and towards the Landskip, he noted not. I was just aiming, for Mirth's Sake, to steale away, when he suddainlie turned about and fell to speaking of rurall Life, Happinesse, Heaven, and such like, in a Kind of Rapture; then, with his Elbow half raising him from the Grass, lay looking at me; then commenced humming or singing I know not what Strayn, but 'twas of '*begli Occhi*' and '*Chioma aurata*;' and he kept smiling the while he sang.

After

After a Time we went In-doors ; and then came my firste Pang : for *Father* founde out how I had pledged myselve overnighte ; and for a Moment looked soe grave, that my Heart misgave me for having beene soe hastie. However, it soone passed off ; deare *Father's* Countenance cleared, and he even seemed merrie at Table ; and soone after Dinner alle the Party dispersed savè Mr. *Milton*, who loitered with me on the Terrace. After a short Silence he exclaimed, “ How good is our *God* to us in alle his “ Gifts ! For Instance, in this Gift of “ *Lóve*, whereby had he withdrawn from “ visible Nature a thousand of its glo- “ rious Features and gay Colourings, we “ shoulde stille possess, *from within*, the “ Means of throwing over her clouded “ Face an entirelie different Hue ! while “ as it is, what was pleasing before now “ pleaseth more than ever ! Is it not “ soe, sweet *Moll* ? May I express thy “ Feelings as well as mine own, un- “ blamed ?

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“blamed? or am I too adventurous?  
 “You are silent; well, then, let me be-  
 “lieve that we think alike, and that the  
 “Emotions of the few laste Hours have  
 “given such an Impulse to alle that is  
 “high, and sweete, and deepe, and pure,  
 “and holy in our innermoste Hearts,  
 “as that we seeme now onlie firste to  
 “taste the *Life of Life*, and to perceiue  
 “how much nearer Earth is to Heaven  
 “than we thought! Is it soe? Is it not  
 “soe?” and I was constrayned to say,  
 “Yes,” at I scarcelye knew what; grudg-  
 inglye too, for I feared having once alrea-  
 die sayd “Yes” too soone. But he saw  
 nought amisse, for he was expecting  
 nought amisse; soe went on, most like  
 Truth and Love that Lookes could  
 speake or Words sounde: “Oh, I know  
 “it, I feel it:—henceforth there is a Life  
 “reserved for us in which Angels may  
 “sympathize. For this most excellent  
 “Gift of Love shall enable us to read  
 “together the whole Booke of Sanctity  
 “and

“and Virtue, and emulate eache other  
“in carrying it into Practice; and as  
“the wise *Magians* kept their Eyes  
“steadfastlie fixed on the Star, and fol-  
“lowed it righte on, through rough and  
“smoothe, soe we, with this bright Bea-  
“con, which indeed is set on Fire of  
“Heaven, shall pass on through the  
“peaceful Studdies, surmounted Adver-  
“sities, and victorious Agonies of Life,  
“ever looking steadfastlie up!”

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Alle this, and much more, as tedious to heare as to write, did I listen to, firste with flagging Attention, next with concealed Wearinesse;—and as Wearinesse, if indulged, never *is* long concealed, it soe chanced, by Ill-luck, that Mr. *Milton*, suddainlie turning his Eyes from Heaven upon poor me, caughte, I can scarcelie expresse how slighte, an Indication of Discomforte in my Face; and instantlie a Cloud crossed his owne, though as thin as that through which the Sun shines while it floats over him.

Oh,

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Oh, 'twas not of a Moment! and yet *in that Moment* we seemed each to have seen the other, though but at a Glance, under new Circumstances:—as though two Persons at a Masquerade had just removed their Masques and put them on agayn. This gave me my seconde Pang:—I felt I had given him Payn; and though he made as though he forgot it directly, and I tooke Payns to make him forget it, I could never be quite sure whether he had.

\* \* \* \* My Spiritts were soe dashed by this, and by learning his Age to be soe much more than I had deemed it, (for he is thirty-five! who coulde have thoughte it?) that I had, thenceforthe the Aire of being much more discrete and pensive than belongeth to my Nature; whereby he was, perhaps, well pleased. As I became more grave he became more gay; soe that we met each other, as it were, half-way, and became righte pleasant. If his Countenance



tenance were comely before, it is quite heavenlie now ; and yet I question whether my Love increaseth as rapidlie as my Feare. Surelie my Folly will prove as distastefull to him, as his over-much Wisdom to me. The Dread of it hath alarmed me alreadie. What has become, even now, of alle my gay Visions of Marriage, and *London*, and the Play-houses, and the *Towre*? They have faded away thus earlie, and in their Place comes a Foreboding of I can scarce say what. I am as if a Child, receiving from some olde Fairy the Gift of what seemed a fayre Doll's House, shoulde hastilie open the Doore thereof, and starte back at beholding nought within but a huge Cavern, deepe, high, and vaste ; in parte glittering with glorious Crystals, and the Rest hidden in obscure Darknesse.

Deare *Rose* came this Morning. I flew forthe to welcome her, and as I drew near, she lookt upon me with such

a

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a Kind of Awe as that I could not forbear laughing. Mr. *Milton* having slept at *Sheepscote*, had made her privy to our Engagement; for indeede, he and Mr. *Agnew* are such Friends, he will keep Nothing from him. Thus *Rose* heares it before my owne Mother, which shoulde not be. When we had entered my Chamber, she embraced me once and agayn, and seemed to think soe much of my uncommon Fortune, that I beganne to think more of it my selfe. To heare her talke of Mr. *Milton* one would have supposed her more in Love with him than I. Like a Book-worm as she is, she fell to praying his Composures. "Oh, the leaste I care for in him is his Versing," quoth I; and from that Moment a Spiritt of Mischief tooke Possession of me, to do a thousand heedlesse, ridiculous Things throughout the Day, to shew *Rose* how little I set by the Opinion of soe wise a Man. Once or twice Mr. *Milton* lookt earnestlie

earnestlie and questioninglie at me, but I heeded him not.

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\* \* \* \* Discourse at Table graver and less pleasant, methoughte, than heretofore. Mr. *Busire* having dropt in, was avised to ask Mr. *Milton* why, having had an university Education, he had not entered the Church. He replied, drylie enough, because he wouldè not subscribe himselfe *Slave* to anie Formularies of Men's making. I saw *Father* bite his lip; and *Roger Agnew* mildly observed, he thought him wrong; for that it was not for an Individual to make Rules for another Individual, but yet that the generall Voice of the Wise and Good, removed from the pettie Prejudices of private Feeling, mighte pronounce authoritativelie wherein an Individual was righte or wrong, and frame Laws to keepe him in the righte Path. Mr. *Milton* replied, that manie Fallibles could no more make up an Infallible than manie Finites coulde make an Infinite.

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Infinite. Mr. *Agnew* rejoyned, that ne'erthelesse, an Individual who opposed himselfe agaynst the generall Current of the Wise and Good, was, leaste of alle, likelie to be in the Right; and that the Limitations of human Intellect which made the Judgment of manie wise Men liable to Question, certainlie made the Judgment of *anie* wise Man, self-dependent, more questionable still. Mr. *Milton* shortlie replied that there were Particulars in the required Oaths which made him unable to take them without Perjurie. And soe, an End: but 'twas worth a World to see *Rose* looking soe anxiouslie from the one Speaker to the other, desirous that eache should be victorious; and I was sorry that it lasted not a little longer.

As *Rose* and I tooke our Way to the Summer-house, she put her Arm round me, saying, "How charming is divine "Philosophie!" I coulde not helpe asking if she did not meane how charming  
ing

ing was the Philosophie of one particular Divine? Soe then she discoursed with me of Things more seemlie for Women than Philosophie or Divinitie either. Onlie, when Mr. *Agnew* and Mr. *Milton* joyned us, she woulde aske them to repeat one Piece of Poetry after another, beginning with *Carew's*—

“ *He who loves a rosie Cheeke,  
Or a coral Lip admires,—*”

and crying at the End of eache, “ Is not that lovely? Is not that divine?” I franklie sayd I liked none of them soe much as some Mr. *Agnew* had recited, concluding with—

“ *Mortals that would follow me,  
Love Virtue : she alone is free.*”

Whereon Mr. *Milton* surprised me with a sudden Kiss, to the immoderate Mirthe of *Rose*, who sayd I coulde not have looked more discomposed had he pretended he was the Author of those Verses. I afterwards found he *was* ;  
but

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but I think she laught more than there was neede.

We have ever been considered a sufficientlie religious Familie: that is, we goe regularlie to Church on Sabbaths and Prayer-dayes, and keepe alle the Fasts and Festivalles. But Mr. *Milton's* Devotion hath attayned a Pitch I can neither imitate nor even comprehend. The spirituall World seemeth to him not onlie reall, but I may almoste say visible. For instance, he tolde *Rose*, it appears, that on *Tuesday* Nighte, (that is the same Evening I had promised to be his,) as he went homewards to his Farm-lodging, he fancied the Angels whisperinge in his Eares, and singing over his Head, and that instead of going to his Bed like a reasonable Being, he lay down on the Grass, and gazed on the sweete, pale Moon till she sett, and then on the bright Starres till he seemed to see them moving in a slowe, solemn Dance, to the Words, "*How glorious is*  
" our

“*our God!*” And alle about him, he said, he *knew*, tho’ he coulde not see them, were spirituall Beings repairing the Ravages of the Day on the Flowers, amonge the Trees, and Grasse, and Hedges; and he believed ’twas onlie the Filme that originall Sin had spread over his Eyes, that prevented his seeing them. I am thankful for this same Filme,—I cannot abide Fairies, and Witches, and Ghosts—ugh! I shudder even to write of them; and were it onlie of the more harmlesse Sort, one woulde never have the Comforte of thinkinge to be alone. I feare Churchyardes and dark Corners of alle Kinds; more especiallye Spiritts; and there is onlie one I would even wish to see at my bravest, when deepe Love casteth out Feare; and that is of Sister *Anne*, whome I never associate with the Worme and Winding-sheete. Oh no! I think *she*, at leaste, dwells amonge the Starres, having sprung straitte up into Lighte  
and

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and Blisse the Moment she put off Mortalitie; and if she, why not others? Are *Adam* and *Abraham* alle these Yeares in the unconscious Tomb? Theire Bodies, but surelie not their Spirits? else; why dothe *Christ* speak of *Lazarus* lying in *Abraham's* Bosom, while the Brothers of *Dives* are yet riotouslie living? Yet what becomes of the Daye of generall Judgment, if some be thus pre-judged? I must aske Mr. *Milton*,—yes, I thinkè I can find it in my Heart to aske him about this in some solemn, stille Hour, and perhaps he will sett at Rest manie Doubts and Misgivings that at sundrie Times trouble me; being soe wise a Man.

*Bedtime.*

\* \* \* \* Glad to steale away from the noisie Companie in the Supper-roome, (comprising some of *Father's* Fellow-magistrates,) I went down with *Robin* and *Kate* to the Fish-ponds; it was scarce Sunset: and there, while we  
threw



threw Crumbs to the Fish and watched them come to the Surface, were followed, or ever we were aware, by Mr. *Milton*, who sate down on the stone Seat, drew *Robin* between his Knees, stroked his Haire, and askt what we were talking about. *Robin* sayd I had beene telling them a fairie Story; and Mr. *Milton* observed that was an infinite Improvement on the jangling, puzzle-headed Prating of Country Justices, and wished I would tell it agayn. But I was afraid. But *Robin* had no Feares; soe told the Tale roundlie; onlie he forgot the End. Soe he found his way backe to the Middle, and seemed likelie to make it last alle Night; onlie Mr. *Milton* sayd he seemed to have got into the Labyrinth of *Crete*, and he must for Pitie's Sake give him the Clew. Soe he finished *Robin's* Story, and then tolde another, a most lovelie one, of Ladies, and Princes, and Enchanters, and a brazen Horse, and he sayd the end of *that* Tale had been  
cut

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cut off too, by Reason the Writer had died before he finished it. But *Robin* cried, "Oh! finish this too," and hugged and kist him; soe he did; and me-thoughte the End was better than the Beginninge. Then he sayd, "Now, "sweet *Moll*, you have onlie spoken this "Hour past by your Eyes; and we must "hear your pleasant Voice." "An "Hour?" cried *Robin*. "Where are all "the red Clouds gone, then?" quoth *Mr. Milton*, "and what business hathe "the Moon yonder?" "Then we must "go indoors," quoth I. But they cryed "No," and *Robin* helde me fast, and *Mr. Milton* sayd I might know even by the distant Sounds of ill-governed Mer-riment that we were winding up the Week's Accounts of Joy and Care more consistentlie where we were than we coulde doe in the House. And indeede just then I hearde my *Father's* Voice swelling a noisie Chorus; and hoping *Mr. Milton* did not distinguish it, I askt  
him

him if he loved Musick. He answered, soe much that it was Miserie for him to hear anie that was not of the beste. I secretlie resolved he should never heare mine. He added, he was come of a musicalle Familie, and that his Father not onlie sang well, but played finely on the Viol and Organ. Then he spake of the sweet Musick in *Italy*, untill I longed to be there; but I tolde him Nothing in its Way ever pleased me more than to heare the Choristers of *Magdalen* College usher in *May* Day by chaunting a Hymn at the Top of the Church Towre. Discoursing of this and that, we thus sate a good While ere we returned to the House.

\* \* \* \* Coming out of Church, he woulde shun the common Field, where the Villagery led up their Sports, saying, he deemed Quoit-playing and the like to be unsuitable Recreations on a Daye whereupon the *Lord* had restricted us from speakinge our owne Words,  
and

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and thinking our own (that is, secular) Thoughts: and that he believed the Law of *God* in this Particular woulde soone be the Law of the Land, for Parliament woulde shortlie put down *Sunday* Sports. I askt, "What, the *King's* Parliament "at *Oxford*?" He answered, "No; the "*Country's* Parliament at *Westminster*." I sayd, I was sorrie, for manie poor hardworking Men had no other Holiday. He sayd, another Holiday woulde be given them; and that whether or no, we must not connive at Evil, which we doe in permitting an *holy Daye* to sink into a Holiday. I sayd, but was it not the *Jewish* Law which had made such Restrictions? He sayd, yes, but that *Christ* came not to destroy the moral Law, of which Sabbath-keeping was a Part, and that even its natural Finesse for the bodily Welfare of Man and Beast was such as no wise Legislator would abolish or abuse it, even had he no Consideration for our spiritual and  
immortal

immortal Part: and that 'twas a well-known Fact that Beasts of Burthen, which had not one Daye of Rest in seven, did lesse Worke in the End. As for oure Soules, he said, they required their spiritual Meales as much as our Bodies required theirs; and even poore, rusticall Clownes who coulde not reade, mighte nourish their better Parts by an holie Pause, and by looking within them, and around them, and above them. I felt inclined to tell him that long Sermons alwaies seemed to make me love *God* less insteade of more, but woulde not; fearing he mighte take it that I meant *he* had been giving me one.

1648.

*Mother* hath returned! The Moment I hearde her Voice I fell to trembling. At the same moment I hearde *Robin* cry, "Oh, *Mother*, I have broken the "greene Beaker!" which betraied Apprehension in another Quarter. However, she quite mildlie replied, "Ah, I knew  
" the

Monday.

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“ the Handle was loose,” and then kist me with soe great Affection that I felt quite easie. She had beene withhelde by a troublesome Cold from returning at the appointed Time, and cared not to write. ’Twas just Supper-time, and there were the Children to kiss and to give their Bread and Milk, and *Bill’s* Letter to reade ; soe that Nothing particular was sayd till the younger Ones were gone to Bed, and *Father* and *Mother* were taking some Wine and Toast. Then says *Father*, “ Well, Wife, have you got the five hundred Pounds ? ” “ No,” she answers, rather careleslie. “ I tolde you how ’twoulde be,” says *Father*; “ you mighte as well have stayed at Home.” “ Really, Mr. *Powell*,” says *Mother*, “ soe seldom as I stir from my owne Chimney-corner, you need not to grudge me, I think, a few Dayes among our mutuall Relatives.” “ I shall goe to Gaol,” says *Father*. “ Nonsense,” says *Mother*; “ to Gaol, indeed ! ”

“ Well,

“ Well, then, who is to keepe me from  
“ it? ” says *Father*, laughing. “ I will  
“ answer for it, Mr. *Milton* will wait a  
“ little longer for his Money,” says *Mother*,  
“ he is an honourable Man, I suppose.”  
“ I wish he may thinke me one,” says  
*Father*; “ and as to a little longer,  
“ what is the goode of waiting for what  
“ is as unlikelie to come eventuellie as  
“ now? ” “ You must answer that for  
“ yourselfe,” says *Mother*, looking wearie:  
“ I have done what I can, and can doe  
“ no more.” “ Well, then, ’tis lucky Mat-  
“ ters stand as they do,” says *Father*.  
“ Mr. *Milton* has been much here in your  
“ Absence, my Dear, and has taken a  
“ liking to our *Moll*; soe, believing him,  
“ as you say, to be an honourable Man,  
“ I have promised he shall have her.”  
“ Nonsense,” cries *Mother*, turning red  
and then pale. “ Never farther from  
“ Nonsense,” says *Father*, “ for ’tis to be,  
“ and by the Ende of the Month too.”  
“ You are bantering me, Mr. *Powell*,”  
says

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says *Mother*. "How can you suppose  
 "soe, my Deare?" says *Father*, "you  
 "doe me Injustice." "Why, *Moll!*"  
 cries *Mother*, turning sharplie towards  
 me, as I sate mute and fearfull, "what  
 "is alle this, Child? You cannot, you  
 "dare not think of wedding this round-  
 "headed Puritan." "Not round-headed,"  
 sayd I, trembling; "his Haire is as long  
 "and curled as mine." "Don't bandy  
 "Words with me, Girl," says *Mother*,  
 passionatelié, "see how unfit you are  
 "to have a House of your owne, who  
 "cannot be left in Charge of your *Fa-*  
 "*ther's* for a Fortnighte, without falling  
 "into Mischiefe!" "I won't have *Moll*  
 "chidden in that Way," says *Father*, "she  
 "has fallen into noe Mischiefe, and has  
 "beene a discreete and dutifull Child."  
 "Then it has beene alle your doing," says  
*Mother*, "and you have forced the Child  
 "into this Match." "Noe Forcing what-  
 "ever," says *Father*, "they like one ano-  
 "ther, and I am glad of it, for it happens  
 "to



“to be very convenient.” “Convenient, “indeed,” repeats *Mother*, and falls a-weeping. Thereon I must needs weepe too, but she says, “Begone to Bed; “there is noe Neede that you shoulde “sit by to heare your owne *Father* “confesse what a Foole he has beene.”

1643.

To my Bedroom I have come, but cannot yet seek my Bed; the more as I still heare their Voices in Contention below.

This morninge's Breakfast was moste uncomfortable, I feeling like a checkt Child, scarce minding to look up or to eat. *Mother*, with eyes red and swollen, scarce speaking save to the Children; *Father* directing his Discourse chieflie to *Dick*, concerning Farm Matters and the Rangership of *Shotover*, tho' 'twas easie to see his Mind was not with them. Soe soone as alle had dispersed to their customed Taskes, and I was loitering at the Window, *Father* calls aloud to me  
from

Tuesday.

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from his Studdy. Thither I go, and find him and *Mother*, she sitting with her Back to both. "*Moll*," says *Father*, with great Determination, "you have accepted Mr. *Milton* to please yourself, you will marry him out of Hand to please me." "Spare me, spare me," Mr. *Powell*," interrupts *Mother*, "if the Engagement may not be broken off, at the least precipitate it not with this indecent Haste. Postpone it till——" "Till when?" says *Father*. "Till the Child is old enough to know her owne Mind." "That is, to put off an honourable Man on false Pretences," says *Father*, "she is olde enough to know it already. Speake, *Moll*, are you of your *Mother's* mind to give up Mr. *Milton* altogether?" I trembled, but sayd, "No." "Then, as his Time is precious, and he knows not when he may leave his Home agayn, I save you the Trouble, Child, of naming a Day, for it shall be the *Monday* before *Whitsun-tide*."

“*tide.*” Thereat *Mother* gave a kind of Groan; but as for me, I had like to have fallen on the Ground, for I had had noe Thoughte of such Haste. “See “what you are doing, Mr. *Powell*,” says *Mother*, compassionating me, and raising me up, though somewhat roughlie; “I prophecie Evil of this Match.” “Prophets of Evil are sure to find “Listeners,” says *Father*, “but I am “not one of them;” and soe left the Room. Thereon my *Mother*, who alwaies feares him when he has a Fit of Determination, loosed the Bounds of her Passion, and chid me so unkindlie, that, humbled and mortified, I was glad to seeke my Chamber.

\* \* \* \* Entering the Dining-room, however, I uttered a Shriek on seeing *Father* fallen back in his Chair, as though in a Fit, like unto that which terrified us a Year ago; and *Mother* hearing me call out, ran in, loosed his Collar, and soone broughte him to himselfe,

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selfe, tho' not without much Alarm to alle. He made lighte of it himselfe, and sayd 'twas merelie a suddain Rush of Blood to the Head, and woulde not be dissuaded from going out; but *Mother* was playnly smote at the Heart, and having lookt after him with some Anxietie, exclaimed, "I shall neither meddle, nor make more in this Businesse: your *Father's* suddain Seizures shall never be layd at my Doore;" and soe left me, till we met at Dinner. After the Cloth was drawne, enters Mr. *Milton*, who goes up to *Mother*, and with gracefullnesse kisses her Hand; but she withdrewe it pettishly, and tooke up her Sewing, on the which he lookt at her wonderingly, and then at me; then at her agayne, as though he would reade her whole Character in her Face; which having seemed to doe, and to write the same in some private Page of his Heart, he never troubled her or himselfe with further Comment, but tooke up Matters  
just

just where he had left them last. Ere we parted we had some private Conference touching our Marriage, for hastening which he had soe much to say that I could not long contend with him, especiallie as I found he had plainlie made out that *Mother* loved him not.

1643.

House full of Companie, leaving noe Time to write nor think. *Mother* sayth, tho' she cannot forbode an happie Marriage, she will provide for a merrie Wedding, and hathe growne more than commonlie tender to me, and given me some Trinkets, a piece of fine *Holland* Cloth, and enoughe of green Sattin for a Gown, that will stand on End with its owne Richnesse. She hathe me constantlie with her in the Kitchen, Pastrie, and Store-room, telling me 'tis needfulle I should improve in Housewiferie, seeing I shall soe soone have a Home of my owne.

Wednesday.

But I think *Mother* knows not, and I  
am

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am afeard to tell her, that Mr. *Milton* hath no House of his owne to carry me to, but onlie Lodgings, which have well-suited his Bachelor State, but may not, 'tis likelie, beseeme a Lady to live in. He deems so himself, and sayeth we will look out for an hired House together, at our Leisure. Alle this he hath sayd to me in an Undertone, in *Mother's* Presence, she sewing at the Table and we sitting in the Window; and 'tis difficult to tell how much she heares, for she will aske no Questions, and make noe Comments, onlie compresses her Lips, which makes me think she knows.

The Children are in turbulent Spiritts; but *Robin* hath done nought but mope and make Moan since he learnt he must soe soone lose me. A Thought hath struck me,—Mr. *Milton* educates his Sister's Sons; two Lads of about *Robin's* Age. What if he woulde consent to take my Brother under his Charge? perhaps *Father* would be willing.

Last

Last Visitt to *Sheepscote*—at leaste, as *Mary Powell*; but kind *Rose* and *Roger Agnew* will give us the Use of it for a Week on our Marriage, and spend the Time with dear *Father* and *Mother*, who will neede their Kindnesse. *Rose* and I walked long aboute the Garden, her Arm around my neck; and she was avised to say,—

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“*Clothe of Frieze, be not to bold,  
Tho’ thou be matcht with Cloth of  
Gold,—*”

and then craved my Pardon for soe unmannerly a Rhyme, which indeede, methoughte, needed an Excuse, but exprest a Feare that I knew not (what she called) my high Destiny, and prayed me not to trifle with Mr. *Milton’s* Feelings nor in his Sichte, as I had done the Daye she dined at *Forest Hill*. I laught, and sayd, he must take me as he found me: he was going to marry  
*Mary*

1643.

*Mary Powell*, not the *Wise Widow of Tekoah*. *Rose* lookt wistfullie, but I bade her take Heart, for I doubted not we shoulde content each the other; and for the Rest, her Advice shoulde not be forgotten. Thereat, she was pacyfide.

May 22nd.

Alle Bustle and Confusion,—slaying of Poultrie, making of Pastrie, etc. People coming and going, prest to dine and to sup, and refuse, and then stay, the colde Meats and Wines ever on the Table; and in the Evening, the Rebecks and Recorders sent for that we may dance in the Hall. My Spiritts have been most unequal; and this Evening I was overtaken with a suddain Faintnesse, such as I never but once before experienced. They would let me dance no more; and I was quite tired enoughe to be glad to sit aparte with Mr. *Milton* neare the Doore, with the Moon shining on us; until at length he drew me out into the Garden. He spake of Happinesse



nesse and Home, and Hearts knit in Love, and of heavenlie Espousals, and of Man being the Head of the Woman, and of our *Lord's* Marriage with the Church, and of white Robes, and the Bridegroom coming in Clouds of Glory, and of the Voices of singing Men and singing Women, and eternall Spring, and eternall Bliss, and much that I cannot call to Mind, and other-much that I coulde not comprehend, but which was in mine Ears as the Song of Birds, or Falling of Waters.

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*Rose* hath come, and hath kindlie offered to help pack the Trunks, (which are to be sent off by the Waggon to *London*,) that I may have the more Time to devote to Mr. *Milton*. Nay, but he will soon have all my Time devoted to himself, and I would as lief spend what little remains in mine accustomed Haunts, after mine accustomed Fashion. I had purposed a Ride on *Clover* this Morning,

May 23rd.

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Morning, with *Robin*; but the poor Boy must I trow be disappointed.

—And for what? Oh me! I have hearde such a long Sermon on Marriage-duty and Service, that I am faine to sit down and weepe. But no, I must not, for they are waiting for me in the Hall, and the Guests are come and the Musick is tuning, and my Lookes must not betray me.—And now farewell, *Journall*; or *Rose*, who first bade me keepe you (little deeming after what Fashion), will not pack you up, and I will not close you with a heavie Strayn. *Robin* is calling me beneath the Window,—*Father* is sitting in the Shade, under the old Pear-tree, seemingly in gay Discourse with Mr. *Milton*. To-morrow the Village-bells will ring for the Marriage of

MARY POWELL.

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*London,*

London,  
Mr. Russell's, Taylor,  
Bride's Churchyard.

Oh me! is this my new Home? my Heart sinks alreadie. After the swete fresh Ayre of *Sheepscote*, and the Cleanliness, and the Quiet, and the pleasant Smells, Sightes, and Sounds, alle whereof Mr. *Milton* enjoyed to the Full as keenlie as I, saying they minded him of *Paradise*,—how woulde *Rose* pitie me, could she view me in this close Chamber, the Floor whereof of dark, uneven Boards, must have beene layd, methinks, three hundred Years ago; the oaken Pannells, utterlie destitute of Polish, and with sundrie Chinks; the Bed with dull brown Hangings, lined with as dull a greene, occupying Half the Space; and Half the Remainder being filled with dustie Books, whereof there are Store alsoe in every other Place. This Mirror,  
I

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I should thinke, belonged to faire *Rosamond*. And this Arm-chair to King *Lear*. Over the Chimnie hangs a ruefull Portrait,—maybe of *Grotius*, but I shoulde sooner deeme it of some Worthie before the Flood. Onlie one Quarter of the Casement will open, and that upon the Prospect, oh, dolefull! of a Churchyarde! Mr. *Milton* had need be as blythe as he was all the Time we were at *Sheeps-cote*, or I shall be buried in that same Churchyarde within the Twelvemonth. 'Tis well he has stepped out to see a Friend, that I may in his Absence get ridd of this Fit of the Dismalls. I wish it may be the last. What would *Mother* say to his bringing me to such a Home as this? I will not think. Soe this is *London*! How diverse from the "towred Citie" of my Husband's versing! and of his Prose too; for as he spake, by the Way, of the Disorders of our Time, which extend even into eache domestick Circle, he sayd that alle must,  
for

for a While, appear confused to our imperfect View, just as a mightie Citie unto a Stranger whosholde beholde around him huge, unfinished Fabrics, the Plan whereof he could but imperfectlie make out amid the Builders' disorderlie Apparatus; but that, *from afar*, we might perceive glorious Results from party Contentions,—Freedom springing up from Oppression, Intelligence succeeding Ignorance, Order following Disorder, just as that same Traveller, looking at the Citie from a distant Height, should beholde Towres and Spires glistering with Gold and Marble, Streets stretching in lessening Perspectives, and Bridges flinging their white Arches over noble Rivers. But what of this saw we all along the *Oxford Road*? Firstlie, there was noe commanding Height; second, there was the Citie obscured by a drizzling Rain; the Ways were foul, the Faces of those we mett spake less of Pleasure than Business, and Bells were tolling, but  
none

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none ringing. Mr. *Milton's* Father, a gray-haired, kind old Man, was here to give us Welcome: and his firste Words, were, "Why, *John*, thou hast stolen a "March on us. Soe quickly, too, and "soe snug! but she is faire enoughe, "Man, to excuse thee, Royalist or noe."

And soe, taking me in his Arms, kist me franklie.—But I heare my Husband's Voice, and another with it.

Thursday.

'Twas a Mr. *Lawrence* whom my Husband brought Home last Nighte to sup; and the Evening passed righte pleasantlie, with News, Jestes, and a little Musicke. Todaye hath been kindlie devoted by Mr. *Milton* to shewing me Sights:—and oh! the strange diverting Cries in the Streets, even from earlie Dawn! "New Milk and Curds from the "Dairie!"—"Olde Shoes for some "Brooms!"—"Anie Kitchen-stuffe, "have you, Maids?"—"Come buy my "greene Herbes!"—and then in the  
Streets

Streets, here a Man preaching, there another juggling: here a Boy with an Ape, there a Show of *Nineveh*: next the News from the North; and as for the China Shops and Drapers in the *Strand*, and the Cooks' Shops in *Westminster*, with the smoking Ribs of Beef and fresh Salads set out on Tables in the Street, and Men in white Aprons crying out, "Calf's Liver, Tripe, and hot Sheep's Feet"—'twas enoughe to make One untimelie hungrie,—or take One's Appetite away, as the Case might be. Mr. *Milton* shewed me the noble Minster, with King *Harry* Seventh's Chapel adjoining; and pointed out the old House where *Ben Jonson* died. Near the *Broade Sanctuarie*, we fell in with a slighte, dark-complexioned young Gentleman of two or three and twenty, whome my Husband espying cryed, "What, *Marvell!*" the other comically answering, "What *Marvel?*" and then, handsomelie saluting me and complimenting

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menting Mr. *Milton*, much lighte and pleasant Discourse ensued; and finding we were aboute to take Boat, he volunteered to goe with us on the River. After manie Hours' Exercise, I have come Home fatigued, yet well pleased. Mr. *Marvell* sups with us.

I wish I could note down a Tithe of the pleasant Things that were sayd last Nighte. First, olde Mr. *Milton* having stept out with his Son,—I called in *Rachael*, the younger of Mr. *Russell's* Serving-maids, (for we have none of our owne as yet, which tends to much Discomfiture,) and, with her Aide, I dusted the Bookes and sett them up in half the space they had occupied; then cleared away three large Basketfuls of the absolute Rubbish, torn letters and the like, and sent out for Flowers, (which it seemeth strange enoughe to me to *buy*,) which gave the Chamber a gayer Aire, and soe my Husband sayd when he came in, calling me the fayrest of them alle;  
and



and then, sitting down with Gayety to the Organ, drew forth the from it heavenlie Sounds. Afterwards Mr. *Marvell* came in, and they discoursed about *Italy*, and Mr. *Milton* promised his Friend some Letters of Introduction to *Jacopo Gaddi*, *Clementillo*, and others.—

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After Supper, they wrote Sentences, Definitions, and the like, after a Fashion of *Catherine de' Medici*, some of which I have lay aside for *Rose*.

—To-day we have seene *St. Paul's* faire Cathedral, and the School where Mr. *Milton* was a Scholar when a Boy; thence, to the Fields of *Finsbury*; where are Trees and Windmills enow: a Place much frequented for practising Archery and other manlie Exercises.

Tho' we rise betimes, olde Mr. *Milton* is earlier still; and I always find him sitting at his Table beside the Window, (by Reason of the Chamber being soe dark,)

Saturday.

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dark,) sorting I know not how manie Bundles of Papers tied with red Tape; each so like the other that I marvel how he knows them aparte. This Morning, I found the poor old Gentleman in sad distress at missing a Manuscript Song of Mr. *Henry Lawes*'s, the onlie Copy extant, which he persuaded himselfe that I must have sent down to the Kitchen Fire Yesterday. I am convinced I dismist not a single Paper that was not torne eache Way, as being utterlie uselesse; but as the unluckie Song cannot be founde, he sighs and is certayn of my Delinquence, as is *Hubert*, his own Man; or, as he more frequentlie calls him, his "odd Man;"—and an odd Man indeede is Mr. *Hubert*, readie to address his Master or Master's Sonne on the merest Occasion, without waiting to be spoken to; tho' he expecteth Others to treat them with far more Deference than he himself payeth.

—Dead

—Dead tired, this Daye, with soe much Exercise; but woulde not say soe, because my Husband was thinking to please me by shewing me soe much. Spiritts flagging, however. These *London* Streets wearie my Feet. We have been over the House in *Aldersgate Street*, the Garden whereof disappointed me, having hearde soe much of it; but 'tis far better than none, and the House is large enough for Mr. *Milton's* Familie and my *Father's* to boote. Thought how pleasant 'twould be to have them alle aboute me next *Christmasse*; but that holie time is no longer kept with Joyfullnesse in *London*. Ventured, therefore, to express a hope, we mighte spend it at *Forest Hill*; but Mr. *Milton* sayd 'twas unlikelie he should be able to leave Home; and askt, would I go alone?—Constrained, for Shame, to say no; but felt, in my Heart, I would jump to see *Forest Hill* on anie Terms, I soe love alle that dwell there.

Private

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Sunday  
Even.

Private and publick Prayer, Sermons, and Psalm-singing from Morn until Nighte. The onlie Break hath been a Visit to a quaint but pleasing Lady, by Name *Catherine Thompson*, whome my Husband holds in great Reverence. She said manie Things worthy to be remembered; onlie *as* I remember them, I need not to write them down. Sorrie to be caughte napping by my Husband, in the Midst of the third long Sermon. This comes of over-walking, and of being unable to sleep o' Nights; for whether it be the *London* Ayre, or the *London* Methods of making the Beds, or the strange Noises in the Streets, I know not, but I have scarce beene able to close my Eyes before Daybreak since I came to Town.

Monday.

And now beginneth a new Life; for my Husband's Pupils, who were dismiss for a Time for my Sake, returne to their Tasks this Daye, and olde Mr. *Milton* giveth

giveth Place to his two Grandsons, his widowed Daughter's Children, *Edward* and *John Phillips*, whom my Husband led in to me just now. Two plainer Boys I never sett Eyes on; the one weak-eyed and puny, the other prim and puritanicall—no more to be compared to our sweet *Robin!* \* \* \* After a few Words, they retired to their Books; and my Husband, taking my Hand, sayd in his kindest Manner,—“ And now I “leave my sweete *Moll* to the pleasant “Companie of her own goode and innocent Thoughtes; and; if she needs “more, here are both stringed and “keyed Instruments, and Books both “of the older and modern Time, soe “that she will not find the Hours hang “heavie.” Methought how much more I should like a Ride upon *Clover* than all the Books that ever were penned; for the Door no sooner closed upon Mr. *Milton* than it seemed as tho' he had taken alle the Sunshine with him; and

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I fell to cleaning the Casement that I mighte look out the better into the Churchyarde, and then altered Table's and Chairs, and then sate downe with my Elbows resting on the Window-seat, and my Chin on the Palms of my Hands, gazing on I knew not what, and feeling like a Butterflie under a Wine-glass.

I marvelled why it seemed soe long since I was married, and wondered what they were doing at Home,—could fancy I hearde *Mother* chiding, and saw *Charlie* stealing into the Dairie and dipping his Finger in the Cream, and *Kate* feeding the Chickens, and *Dick* taking a Stone out of *Whitestar's* Shoe.

—Methought how dull it was to be passing the best Part of the Summer out of the Reache of fresh Ayre and greene Fields, and wondered, woulde alle my future Summers be soe spent?

Thought how dull it was to live in Lodgings, where one could not even go into the Kitchen to make a Pudding:  
and

and how dull to live in a Town, without some young female Friend with whom one might have ventured into the Streets, and where one could not soe much as feed Colts in a Paddock; how dull to be without a Garden, unable soe much as to gather a Handfulle of ripe Cherries; and how dull to looke into a Churchyarde, where there was a Man digging a Grave!

—When I wearied of staring at the Grave-digger, I gazed at an olde Gentleman and a young Ladie slowlie walking along, yet scarce as if I noted them; and was thinking mostlie of *Forest Hill*, when I saw them stop at our Doore, and presently they were shewn in, by the Name of Doctor and Mistress *Davies*. I sent for my Husband, and entertayned 'em bothe as well as I could, till he appeared, and they were polite and pleasant to me; the young Lady tall and slender, of a cleare brown Skin, and with Eyes that were fine enough; onlie there was a  
supprest

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supprest Smile on her Lips alle the Time, as tho' she had seen me looking out of the Window. She tried me on all Subjects, I think; for she started them more adroitlie than I; and taking up a Book on the Window-seat, which was the *Amadigi* of *Bernardo Tasso*, printed alle in *Italiques*, she sayd, if I loved Poetry, which she was sure I must, she knewe she shoulde love me. I did not tell her whether or noe. Then we were both silent. Then Doctor *Davies* talked vehementlie to Mr. *Milton* agaynst the *King*; and Mr. *Milton* was not so contrarie to him as I could have wished. Then Mistress *Davies* tooke the Word from her Father, and beganne to talke to Mr. *Milton* of *Tasso*, and *Dante*, and *Boiardo*, and *Ariosto*; and then Doctor *Davies* and I were silent. Methoughte they both talked well, tho' I knew so little of their Subject-matter; onlie they complimented eache other too much. I mean not they were insincere, for eache seemed



seemed to think highlie of the other ;  
onlie we neede not saye all we feele.

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To conclude, we are to sup with them  
to-morrow.

*Journall*, I have Nobodie now but  
you, to whome to tell my little Griefs ;  
indeede, before I married, I know not  
that I had anie; and even now, they are  
very small, onlie they are soe new, that  
sometimes my Heart is like to burst.

Wednesday.

—I know not whether 'tis safe to put  
them alle on Paper, onlie it relieves for  
the Time, and it kills Time, and perhaps,  
a little While hence I may looke back  
and see how small they were, and how  
they mighte have beene shunned, or  
better borne. 'Tis worth the Triall.

—Yesterday Morn, for very Weari-  
nesse, I looked alle over my Linen and  
Mr. *Milton's*, to see could I finde anie  
Thing to mend; but there was not a  
Stitch amiss. I woulde have played on  
the Spinnette, but was afrayed he should  
hear

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hear my indifferent Musick. Then, as a last Resource, I tooke a book—*Paul Perrin's Historie of the Waldenses*;—and was, I believe, dozing a little, when I was aware of a continuall Whimpering and Crying. I thought 'twas some Child in the Street; and, having some Comfits in my Pocket, I stept softlie out to the House-door and lookt forth, but no Childe coulde I see. Coming back, the Door of my Husband's Studdy being ajar, I was avised to look in; and saw him, with awfulle Brow, raising his Hand in the very Act to strike the youngest *Phillips*. I could never endure to see a Child struck, soe hastilie cryed out, "Oh, don't!"—whereon he rose, and, as if not seeing me, gently closed the Door, and, before I reached my Chamber, I heardé soe loud a Crying that I began to cry too. Soon, alle was quiet; and my Husband, coming in, stept gently up to me, and putting his Arm about my Neck, sayd, "My dearest Life, never  
" agayn

“agayn, I beseech you, interfere between  
“me and the boys : 'tis as unseemlie as  
“tho' I should interfere between you and  
“your Maids,—when you have any,—  
“and will weaken my Hands, dear *Moll*,  
“more than you have anie Suspicion of.”

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I replied, kissing that same offending Member as I spoke, “Poor *Jack* woulde  
“have beene glad, just now, if I *had*  
“weakened them.”—“But that is not  
“the Question,” he returned, “for we  
“should alle be glad to escape necessary  
“Punishment ; whereas, it is the Power,  
“not the Penalty of our bad Habits,  
“that we shoulde seek to be delivered  
“from.”—“There may,” I sayd, “be  
“necessary, but need not be corporal  
“Punishment.” “That is as may be,”  
returned he, “and hath already beene  
“settled by an Authoritie to which I  
“submit, and hardlie think you will dis-  
“pute, and that is, the Word of *God*.  
“Pain of Body is in Realitie, or ought to  
“be, sooner over and more safelie borne  
“than

“than pain of an ingenuous Mind; and,  
 “as to the *Shame*,—why, as *Lorenzo de’*  
 “*Medici* sayd to *Soccini*, ‘The Shame  
 “‘is in the Offence rather than in the  
 “‘Punishment.’”

I replied, “Our *Robin* had never beene  
 “beaten for his Studdies;” to which he  
 sayd with a Smile that even I must  
 admit *Robin* to be noe greate Scholar.  
 And soe in good Humour left me; but  
 I was in no good Humour, and hoped  
 Heaven mighte never make me the  
 Mother of a Son, for if I should see Mr.  
*Milton* strike him, I should learn to  
 hate the Father.—

Hearing there was like to be Companie  
 at Doctor *Davies*’, I was avised to put  
 on my brave greene Satin Gown; and my  
 Husband sayd it became me well, and  
 that I onlie needed some Primroses and  
 Cowslips in my Lap, to look like *May*;  
 —and somewhat he added about mine  
 Eyes’ “clear shining after Rain,” which  
 avised me he had perceived I had beene  
 crying

crying in the Morning, which I had hoped he had not.

Arriving at the Doctor's House, we were shewn into an emptie Chamber; at least, emptie of Companie, but full of every Thing else; for there were Books, and Globes, and stringed and wind Instruments, and stuffed Birds and Beasts, and Things I know not soe much as the Names of, besides an Easel with a Painting by Mrs. *Mildred* on it, which she meant to be seene, or she woulde have put it away. Subject, "*Brutus's Judgment:*" which I thought a strange unfeeling one for a Woman; and did not wish to be *her* Son. Soone she came in, drest with studded and puritanicall Plainnesse; in brown Taffeta, guarded with black Velvet, which became her well enough, but was scarce suited for the Season. She had much to say about limning, in which my Husband could follow her better than I; and then they went to the Globes, and *Copernicus*, and  
*Galileo*

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*Galileo Galilei*, whome she called a Martyr, but I do not. For, is a Martyr one who is unwillinglie imprisoned, or who formally recants? even tho' he affects afterwards to say 'twas *but* a Form, and cries, "*Eppure, si muove!*" The earlier Christians might have sayd 'twas but a Form to burn a Handfull of Incense before *Jove's* Statua; *Pliny* woulde have let them goe.

Afterwards, when the Doctor came in and engaged my Husband in Discourse, Mistress *Mildred* devoted herselfe to me, and askt what progress I had made with *Bernardo Tasso*. I tolde her, none at alle, for I was equalle faultie at *Italiques* and *Italian*, and onlie knew his best Work thro' Mr. *Fairfax's* Translation; whereat she fell laughing, and sayd she begged my Forgivenessse, but I was confounding the Father with the Sonne; then laught agayn, but pretended 'twas not at me but at a Lady I minded her of, who never could remember to distinguish

guish betwixt *Lionardo da Vinci* and *Lorenzo de' Medici*. That last Name brought up the Recollection of my Morning's Debate with my Husband, which made me feel sad ; and then, Mrs. *Mildred*, seeminge anxious to make me forget her Unmannerliness, commenced, " Can you Paint ? "—" Can you sing ? "—" Can you play the Lute ? "—and, at the last, " What *can* you do ? " I mighte have sayd I coulde comb out my Curls smoother than she coulde hers, but did not. Other Guests came in, and talked so much agaynst Prelacy and the Right divine of Kings that I would fain we had remained at Astronomie and Poetry. For Supper there was little Meat, and noe strong Drinks, onlie a thinnish foreign Wine, with Cakes, Candies, Sweetmeats, Fruits, and Confections. Such, I suppose, is Town Fashion. At the laste, came Musick ; Mistress *Mildred* sang and played ; then prest me to do the like, but I was soe fearfulle, I  
coulede

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could not; so my Husband sayd he woulde play for me, and that would be alle one, and soe covered my Bashfulnesse handsomlie.

Onlie this Morning, just before going to his Studdy, he stept back and sayd, “ Sweet *Moll*, I know you can both play “ and sing—why will you not practice? ” I replyed, I loved it not much. He rejoyned, “ But you know I love it, and “ is not that a Motive? ” I sayd, I feared to let him hear me, I played so ill. He replyed, “ Why, that is the very Reason “ you shoulde seek to play better, and “ I am sure you have Plenty of Time. “ Perhaps, in your whole future Life, you “ will not have such a Season of Leisure “ as you have now,—a golden Oppor- “ tunity, which you will surelie seize.”— Then added, “ Sir *Thomas More’s* Wife “ Learnt to play the Lute, solely that “ she mighte please her Husband.” I “ answered Nay, what Need to tell me “ of Sir *Thomas More’s* Wife, or of *Hugh* “ *Grotius’s*



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“ *Grotius’s* Wife, when I was the Wife  
“ of *John Milton* ? ” He looked at me  
twice, and quicklie, too, at this Saying;  
then laughing, cried, “ You cleaving  
“ Mischief! I hardlie know whether  
“ to take that Speech amisse or well—  
“ however, you shall have the Benefit  
“ of the Doubt. ’

And so away laughing; and I, for  
very Shame, sat down to the Spinnette  
for two wearie Hours, till soe tired, I  
coulde cry; and when I desisted, coulde  
hear *Jack* wailing over his Task. ’Tis  
raining fast, I cannot get out, nor should  
I dare to go alone, nor know where to go  
to if ’twere fine. I fancy ill Smells from  
the Churchyard—’tis long to Dinner-  
time, with noe Change, noe Exercise;  
and oh, I sigh for *Forest Hill*.

—A dull Dinner with Mrs. *Phillips*,  
whom I like not much. *Christopher*  
*Milton* there, who stared hard at me,  
and put me out of Countenance with  
his

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his strange Questions. My Husband checked him. He is a Lawyer, and has Wit enough.

Mrs. *Phillips* speaking of second Marriages, I unawares hurt her by giving my Voice agaynst them. It seems she is thinking of contracting a second Marriage.

—At Supper, wishing to ingratiate myself with the Boys, talked to them of Countrie Sports, etc. : to which the youngest listened greedilie: and at length I was avised to ask them woulde they not like to see *Forest Hill*? to which the elder replied in his most methodicall Manner, “If Mr. *Powell* has a good “Library.” For this Piece of Hypocrisie, at which I heartilie laught, he was commended by his Uncle. Hypocrisie it was, for Master *Ned* cryeth over his Taskes pretty nearlie as oft as the youngest.

Friday.

To rewarde my zealous Practise to-day on the Spinnette, Mr. *Milton* produced

duced a Collection of "*Ayres, and Dialogues for one, two, and three Voices,*" by his Friend, Mr. *Harry Lawes*, which he sayd I shoulde find very pleasant Studdy; and then he told me alle about their getting up the Masque of *Comus* in *Ludlow* Castle, and how well the Lady's Song was sung by Mr. *Lawes'* Pupil, the Lady *Alice*, then a sweet, modest Girl, onlie thirteen Years of Age, —and he told me of the Singing of a faire *Italian* young Signora, named *Leonora Barroni*, with her Mother and Sister, whome he had hearde at *Rome*, at the Concerts of Cardinal *Barberini*; and how she was "as gentle and modest "as sweet *Moll*," yet not afraid to open her Mouth, and pronounce everie Syllable distinctlie, and with the proper Emphasis and Passion when she sang. And after this, to my greate Contentment, he tooke me to the *Gray's Inn Walks*, where, the Afternoon being fine, was much Company.

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After

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After Supper I proposed to the Boys that we shoulde tell Stories; and Mr. *Milton* tolde one charminglie, but then went away to write a *Latin* Letter. Soe *Ned's* Turn came next; and I must for very Mirthe's Sake; write it down in his exact Words, they were soe pragmaticall.

“ On a Daye, there was a certain Child  
 “ wandered forthe, that would play. He  
 “ met a Bee, and sayd, ‘ Bee, wilt thou  
 “ ‘ play with me ?’ The Bee sayd, ‘ No, I  
 “ ‘ have my Duties to perform, tho’ you,  
 “ ‘ it woulde seeme, have none. I must  
 “ ‘ away to make Honey.’ Then the  
 “ Childe, abasht, went to the Ant. He  
 “ sayd, ‘ Will you play with me, Ant ?’  
 “ The Ant replied, ‘ Nay, I must provide  
 “ ‘ against the Winter.’ In shorte, he  
 “ found that everie Bird, Beaste, and  
 “ Insect he accosted, had a closer Eye to  
 “ the Purpose of their Creation than  
 “ himselfe. Then he sayd, ‘ I will then  
 “ ‘ back, and con my Task.’—*Moral.*  
 “ The Moral of the foregoing Fable, my  
 “ deare

“deare *Aunt*, is this—We must love  
“Work better than Play.”

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With alle my Interest for Children,  
how is it possible to take anie Interest  
in soe formall a little Prigge?

I have just done somewhat for Master  
*Ned* which he coulde not doe for him-  
selfe—*viz.* tenderly bound up his Hand,  
which he had badly cut. Wiping away  
some few naturall Tears, he must needs  
say, “I am quite ashamed, *Aunt*, you  
“shoulde see me cry; but the worst of  
“it is, that alle this Payne has beene  
“for noe Good; whereas, when my Uncle  
“beateth me for misconstruing my  
“*Latin*, tho’ I cry at the Time, alle the  
“While I know it is for my Advantage.”  
—If this Boy goes on preaching soe,  
I shall soon hate him.

Saturday.

—Mr. *Milton* having stepped out  
before Supper, came back looking soe  
blythe, that I askt if he had hearde good  
News. He sayd, Yes: that some Friends  
had

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had long beene persuading him, agaynst his Will, to make publick some of his *Latin* Poems; and that, having at length consented to their Wishes, he had beene with *Mosley* the Publisher in *Paul's Churchyard*, who agreed to print them. I sayd, I was sorrie I shoulde be unable to read them. He sayd he was sorrie too; he must translate them for me. I thanked him, but observed that Traductions were never soe good as Originalls. He rejoyned, "Nor am I even a "good Translator." I askt, "Why not "write in your owne Tongue?" He sayd, "*Latin* is understood all over the Worlde." I sayd, "But there are manie "in your owne Country do not under- "stand it." He was silent soe long upon this, that I supposed he did not mean to answer me; but then cried, "You are "right, sweet *Moll*.—Our best Writers "have written their best Works in *En- "glish*, and I will hereafter doe the same, "—for I feel that my best Work is still  
" to

“ *to come.* Poetry hath hitherto beene  
“ with me rather the Recreation of a  
“ Mind conscious of its Health, than the  
“ deliberate Task-work of a Soule that  
“ must hereafter give an Account of its  
“ Talents. Yet my Mind, in the free  
“ Circuit of her Musing, has ranged over  
“ a thousand Themes that lie, like the  
“ Marble in the Quarry, readie for anie  
“ Shape that Fancy and skill may give.  
“ Neither Laziness nor Caprice makes me  
“ difficult in my choice ; for, the longer  
“ I am in selecting my Tree, and laying  
“ my Axe to the Root, the sounder  
“ it will be and the riper for Use. Nor  
“ is an Undertaking that shall be one  
“ of high Duty, to be entered upon  
“ without Prayer and Discipline :—  
“ it woulde be Presumption indeede,  
“ to commence an Enterprize which  
“ I meant shoulde delighte and pro-  
“ fit every instructed and elevated  
“ Mind without so much Paynes-  
“ takinge as it shoulde cost a poor  
“ Mountebank

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“Mountebank to balance a Pole on  
“his Chin.”

Sunday  
Even.

In the Clouds agayn. At Dinner, to-  
daye, Mr *Milton* catechised the Boys  
on the Morning's Sermon, the Heads of  
which, though amounting to a Dozen,  
*Ned* tolde off roundlie. Roguish little  
*Jack* looking sylie at me, says, “*Aunt*  
“coulede not tell off the Sermon.” “Why  
“not?” says his Uncle. “Because she  
“was sleeping,” says *Jack*. Provoked  
with the Child, I turned scarlett, and  
hastilie sayd, “I was not.” Nobodie  
spoke; but I repented the Falsitie the  
Moment it had escaped me; and there  
was *Ned*, a folding of his Hands, draw-  
ing down his Mouth, and closing his  
Eyes. . . . . My Husband tooke me  
to taske for it when we were alone, soe  
tenderlie that I wept.

Monday.

*Jack* sayd this Morning, “I know  
“Something—I know *Aunt* keeps a  
“Journall.”



“ Journall.” “ And a good Thing if you  
 “ kept one, too, *Jack*,” sayd his Uncle,  
 “ It would shew you how little you doe.”  
*Jack* was silenced ; but *Ned*, pursing up  
 his Mouth, says, “ I can’t think what  
 “ *Aunt* can have to put in a Journall—  
 “ should not you like, *Uncle*, to see ?”  
 “ No, *Ned*,” says his Uncle, “ I am upon  
 “ Honour, and your dear *Aunt*’s Journall  
 “ is as safe, for me, as the golden Brace-  
 “ lets that King *Alfred* hung upon the  
 “ High-way. I am glad she has such a  
 “ Resource, and, as we know she cannot  
 “ have much News to put in it, we may  
 “ the more safely rely that it is a Trea-  
 “ sury of sweet, and high, and holy,  
 “ and profitable Thoughtes.”

1643.

Oh, how deeplie I blusht at this ill-  
 deserved Prayse ! How sorrie I was  
 that I had ever registered aught that  
 he would grieve to read ! I secretly  
 resolved that this *Daye*’s Journalling  
 should be the last, untill I had attained  
 a better Frame of Mind.

1643.  
Saturday  
Even.

I have kept Silence, yea, even from good Words, but it has been a Payn and a Griefe unto me. Good Mistress *Catherine Thompson* called on me a few Dayes back, and spoke so wisely and so wholesomelie concerning my Lot, and the Way to make it happy, (she is the first that hath spoken as if 'twere possible it mighte not be so already,) that I felt for a Season quite heartened; but it has alle faded away. Because the source of Cheerfulnesse is not *in* me, anie more than in a dull Landskip, which the Sun lighteneth for awhile, and when he has set, its Beauty is gone.

Oh me! how merry I was at home! The Source of Cheerfulnesse seemed in me *then*, and why is it not *now*? Partly because alle that I was there taught to think right is here thought wrong; because much that I there thought harmlesse is here thought sinfull; because I cannot get at anie of the Things that employed and interested me *there*,  
and

and because the Things within my reach *here* do not interest me. Then, 'tis no small Thing to be continuallie deemed ignorant and misinformed, and to have one's errors continuallie covered, however handsomelie, even before Children. To say Nothing of the Weight upon the Spiritts at firste, from Change of Ayre, and Diet, and Scene, and Loss of habitual Exercise and Companie and householde Cares. These petty Griefs try me sorelie; and when Cousin *Ralph* came in unexpectedlie this Morn, tho' I never much cared for him at Home, yet the sighte of *Rose's* Brother, fresh from *Sheepscote* and *Oxford* and *Forest Hill*, soe upset me that I sank into Tears. No Wonder that Mr. *Milton*, then coming in, should hastilie enquire if *Ralph* had brought ill Tidings from Home; and, finding alle was well there, shoulde look strangelie. He askt *Ralph*, however, to stay to Dinner; and we had much Talk of Home; but now, I regret  
having

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having omitted to ask a thousand Questions.

Sunday  
Even,  
Aug. 15.

Mr. *Milton* in his Closet, and I in my Chamber. For the first Time he seems this Evening to have founde out how dissimilar are our Minds. Meaning to please him, I sayd, "I kept awake bravelie, to-nighte, through that long, long Sermon, for your sake."—"And why not for *God's* Sake?" cried he, "why not for your owne Sake?—Oh, sweet *Wife*, I fear you have yet much to learn of the Depth of Happiness that is comprised in the Communion between a forgiven Soul and its Creator. It hallows the most secular as well as the most spirituall Employments; it gives Pleasure that has no after Bitternesse; it gives Pleasure to *God*—and oh! thinke of the Depth of Meaning in those Words? think what it is for us to be capable of giving *God* Pleasure!"

—Much more, in the same Vein! to which

which I could not, with equal Power, respond; soe, he away to his Studdy, to pray perhaps for my Change of Heart, and I to my Bed.

1643.

Oh Heaven! can it be possible? am I agayn at *Forest Hill*? How strange, how joyfull an Event, tho' brought about with Teares!—Can it be, that it is onlié a Month since I stode at this Toilette as a Bride? and lay awake on that Bed, thinking of *London*? How long a Month! and oh! this present one wille be alle too short.

Aug. 21.  
Saturday.

It seemeth that *Ralph Hewlett*, shocked at my Teares and the Alteration in my Looks, broughte back a dismall Report of me to deare *Father* and *Mother*, pronouncing me either ill or unhappie. Thereupon, *Richard*, with his usuall Impetuositie, prevayled on *Father* to let him and *Ralph* fetch me Home for a While, at leaste till after *Michaelmasse*.

How surprised was I to see *Dick* enter!

My

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My Arms were soe fast about his Neck, and my Face prest soe close to his Shoulder, that I did not for a While perceiv the grave Looke he had put on. At the last, I was avised to ask what brought him soe unexpectedlie to *London*; and then he hemmed and looked at *Ralph*, and *Ralph* looked at *Dick*, and then *Dick* sayd bluntly, he hoped Mr. *Milton* woulde spare me to go Home till after *Michaelmasse*, and *Father* had sent him on Purpose to say soe. Mr. *Milton* lookt surpris'd and hurte, and sayd, how could he be expected to part soe soone with me, a Month's Bride? it must be some other Time: he had intended to take me himselve to *Forest Hill* the following Spring, but coulde not spare Time now, nor lik'd me to goe without him, nor thought I should like it myself. But my Eyes said I *shoulde*, and then he gaz'd earnestlie at me and lookt hurt: and there was a dead Silence. Then *Dick*, hesitating a little, sayd he  
was

was sorrie to tell us my *Father* was ill ; on which I clasped my Hands and beganne to weepe ; and Mr. *Milton*, changing Countenance, askt sundrie Questions, which *Dick* answered well enough ; and then said he woulde not be soe cruel as to keepe me from a Father I soe dearlie loved, if he were sick, though he liked not my travelling in such unsettled Times with so young a Convoy. *Ralph* sayd they had brought *Diggory* with them, who was olde and steddy enough, and had ridden my *Mother's* Mare for my Use ; and *Dick* was for our getting forward a Stage on our Journey the same Evening, but Mr. *Milton* insisted on our abiding till the following Morn, and woulde not be overruled. And gave me leave to stay a Month, and gave me Money, and many kind Words, which I could mark little, being soe overtaken with Concern about dear *Father*, whose Illness I feared to be worse than *Dick* sayd, seeing he seemed soe close and dealt

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dealt in dark Speeches and Parables. After Dinner, they went forth, they sayd, to look after the Horses, but I think to see *London*, and returned nottill Supper.

We got them Beds in a House hard by, and started at earlie Dawn.

Mr. *Milton* kissed me most tenderlie agayn and agayn at parting, as though he feared to lose me; but it had seemed to me soe hard to brook the Delay of even a few Hours when *Father*, in his Sicknesse, was wanting me, that I took Leave of my Husband with less Affection than I mighte have shewn, and onlie began to find my Spiritts lighten when we were fairly quit of *London*, with its vile Sewers and Drains, and to breathe the sweete, pure, Morning Ayre, as we rode swiftlie along. *Dick* called *London* a vile Place, and spake to *Ralph* concerning what they had seene of it overnighte, whence it appeared to me, that he had beene pleasure-seeking more than, in *Father's* State, he ought to have beene.

But



But *Dick* was always a reckless Lad;— and oh, what Joy, on reaching this deare Place, to find *Father* had onlie beene suffering under one of his usual Stomach Attacks, which have no Danger in them, and which *Dick* had exaggerated, fearing Mr. *Milton* woulde not otherwise part with me;—I was a little shocked, and could not help scolding him, though I was the Gainer; but he boldlie defended what he called his “Stratagem of War,” saying it was quite allowable in dealing with a *Puritan*.

As for *Robin*, he was wild with Joy when I arrived; and hath never ceased to hang about me. The other Children are riotous in their Mirth. Little *Joscelyn* hath returned from his Foster-mother’s Farm, and is noe longer a puny Child—’tis thought he will thrive. I have him constantly in my Arms or riding on my Shoulder; and with Delight have revisited alle my olde Haunts, patted *Clover*, &c. Deare *Mother* is  
most

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most kind. The Maids as oft call me Mrs. *Molly* as Mrs. *Milton*, and then smile, and beg Pardon. *Rose* and *Agnew* have been here, and have made me promise to visit *Sheepscote* before I return to *London*. The whole House seems full of Glee.

Monday.

It seems quite strange to heare *Dick* and *Harry* singing loyal Songs and drinking the *King's* Health after soe recentlie hearing his M<sup>r</sup> soe continuallie spoken agaynst. Also, to see a Lad of *Robin's* Age, coming in and out at his Will, doing aniething or nothing; instead of being ever at his Taskes, and looking at Meal-times as if he were repeating them to himselfe. I know which I like best.

A most kind Letter from Mr. *Milton*, hoping *Father* is better, and praying for News of him. How can I write to him without betraying *Dick*? *Robin* and I rode, this morning, to *Sheepscote*.  
Thoughte

Thoughte Mr. *Agnew* received me with unwonted Gravitie. He tolde me he had received a Letter from my Husband, praying News of my Father, seeing I had sent him none, and that he had writ to him that *Father* was quite well, never had been better. Then he sayd to me he feared Mr. *Milton* was labouring under some false Impression. I tolde him trulie, that *Dick*, to get me Home, had exaggerated a trifling Illness of *Father's*, but that I was guiltlesse of it. He sayd *Dick* was inexcusable, and that noe good End coulde justifie a Man of Honour in overcharging the Truth; and that, since I was innocent, I shoulde write to my Husband to clear myself. I said briefly, I woulde; and I mean to do soe, onlie not to-daye. Oh, sweet countrie Life! I was made for you and none other. This riding and walking at one's owne free Will, in the fresh pure Ayre, coming in to earlie, heartie, wholesome Meals, seasoned with harmlesse  
Jests,—

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Jests,—seeing fresh Faces everie Daye come to the House, knowing everie Face one meets out of Doores,—supping in the Garden, and remaining in the Ayre long after the Moon has risen, talking, laughing, or perhaps dancing,—if this be not Joyfulnessse, what is?

For certain, I woulde that Mr. *Milton* were here; but he woulde call our Sports mistimed, and throw a Damp upon our Mirth by not joining in it. Soe I will enjoy my Holiday while it lasts, for it may be long ere I get another—especiallie if his and *Father's* Opinions get wider asunder, as I think they are doing already. My promised Spring Holiday may come to nothing.

Monday.

My Husband hath writ to me strange-  
lie, chiding me most unkindlie for what  
was noe Fault of mine, to wit, *Dick's*  
Falsitie; and wondering I can derive  
anie Pleasure from a Holiday so ob-  
tayned, which he will not curtayl, but  
will

will on noe Pretence extend. Nay! but methinks Mr. *Milton* presumeth somewhat too much on his marital Authoritie, writing in this Strayn. I am no mere Child neither, nor a run-away Wife; nor in such bad Companie, in mine own Father's House, where he firste saw me; and, was it anie Fault of mine, indeed, that *Father* was not ill? or can I wish he had beene? No, truly!

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This Letter hath sorelie vexed me. Dear *Father*, seeing me soe dulle, askt me if I had had bad News. I sayd I had, for that Mr. *Milton* wanted me back at the Month's End. He sayd, lightlie, Oh, that must not be, I must at all Events stay over his Birthdaye, he could not spare me sooner; he woulde settle all that. Let it be so then—I am content enoughe.

To change the Current of my Thoughts, he hath renewed the Scheme for our Visit to Lady *Falkland*, which, Weather permitting,

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permitting, is to take Place to-morrow. 'Tis long since I have seene her, soe I am willing to goe ; but she is dearer to *Rose* than to me, though I respect her much.

Wednesday.

The whole of Yesterday occupyde with our Visit. I love Lady *Falkland* well, yet her religious Mellanchollie and Presages of Evil have left a Weight upon my Spiritts. To-daye, we have a Family Dinner. The *Agnews* come not, but the *Merediths* doe: we shall have more Mirthe if less Wit. My Time now draweth soe short, I must crowd into it alle the Pleasure I can ; and in this, everie one conspires to help me, saying, " Poor *Moll* must soon return to *London*." Never was Creature soe petted or spoylt. How was it there was none of this before I married, when they might have me alwaies? ah, therein lies the Secret. Now, we have mutuallie tasted our Losse.

*Ralph*

*Ralph Hewlett*, going agayn to Town, was avised to ask whether I had anie Commission wherewith to charge him. I bade him tell Mr. *Milton* that since we should meet soe soone, I need not write, but would keep alle my News for our Fire-side. *Robin* added, "Say, we cannot spare her yet," and *Father* echoed the same.

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But I begin to feel now, that I must not prolong my Stay. At the leaste, not beyond *Father's* Birthday. My Month is now hasting to a Close.

Battle at *Newbury*—Lord *Falkland* slayn. Oh, fatal Loss! *Father* and *Mother* going off to my Lady: but I think she will not see them. Aunt and Uncle *Hewlett*, who brought the News, can talk of Nothing else.

Sept. 21.

Alle Sadnesse and Consternation. I am wearie of bad News, public and private, and feel less and less Love for the

Sept. 22.

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the Puritans, yet am forced to seem more loyal than I really am, soe high runs party Feeling just now at Home.

My Month has passed !

Sept. 28.

A most displeas'd letter from my Husband, minding me that my Leave of Absence hath expired, and that he likes not the Messages he received through *Ralph*, nor the unreasonable and hurtfulle Pastimes which he finds have beene making my quiet Home distastefulle. Asking, are they suitable, under Circumstances of nationall Consternation to *my owne* Party, or seemlie in soe young a Wife, apart from her Husband? To conclude, insisting, with more Authoritie than Kindnesse, on my immediate Return.

With Tears in my Eyes, I have beene to my Father. I have tolde him I must goe. He sayth, Oh no, not yet. I persisted, I must, my Husband was soe very angry. He rejoined, What, angry with my



my sweet *Moll*? and for spending a few Days with her old Father? Can it be? hath it come to this already? I sayd, my Month had expired. He sayd, Nonsense, he had always askt me to stay over *Michaelmasse*, till his Birthday; he knew *Dick* had named it to Mr. *Milton*. I sayd, Mr. *Milton* had taken no Notice thereof, but had onlie granted me a Month. He grew peevish, and said, "Pooh, pooh!" Thereat, after a Silence of a Minute or two, I sayd yet agayn, I must goe. He took me by the two Wrists and sayd, Doe you wish to go? I burst into Teares, but made noe Answer. He sayd, That is answer enough,—how doth this Puritan carry it with you, my Child? and snatched his Letter. I sayd, Oh, don't read that, and would have drawn it back; but *Father*, when heated, is impossible to controwl; therefore, quite deaf to Entreaty, he would read the Letter, which was unfit for him in his chafed Mood; then, holding it at Arm's Length,

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Length, and smiting it with his Fist,—  
Ha! and is it thus he dares address a  
Daughter of mine? (with Words added,  
I dare not write)—but be quiet, *Moll*, be  
at Peace, my Child, for he shall not have  
you back for awhile, even though he come  
to fetch you himself. The maddest Thing  
I ever did was to give you to this Round-  
head. He and *Roger Agnew* talked me  
over with soe many fine Words.—What  
possessed me, I know not. Your Mother  
always said Evil woulde come of it. But  
as long as thy Father has a Roof over his  
Head, Child, thou hast a Home.

As soon as he woulde hear me, I begged  
him not to take on soe, for that I was  
not an unhappy Wife ; but my Tears, he  
sayd, belied me ; and indeed, with Fear  
and Agitation, they flowed fast enough.  
But I sayd, I *must* goe home, and wished  
I had gone sooner, and woulde he let  
*Diggory* take me? No, he sayd, not a  
Man Jack on his Land shoulde saddle a  
Horse for me, nor woulde he lend me one  
to

to carry me back to Mr. *Milton*; at the leaste not for a While, till he had come to Reason, and protested he was sorry for having writ to me soe harshly.

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“Soe be content, *Moll*, and make not “two Enemies, instead of one. Goe, help “thy Mother with her clear starching. “Be happy whilst thou art here.”

But ah! more easily said than done. “Alle Joy is darkened; the Mirthe of “the Land is gone!”

At Squire *Paice's* grand Dinner we have been counting on soe many Days; but it gavemenot the Pleasure expected.

Michael-  
masse Day.

The weather is so foul that I am sure Mr. *Milton* woulde not like me to be on the Road, even woulde my Father let me goe.

Oct. 13.

—While writing the above, heard very angrie Voices in the Court-yard, my Father's especiallie, louder than common; and distinguished the Words “Knave,”  
and

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and "Varlet," and "begone." Lookt from my Window and beheld a Man, booted and cloaked, with two Horses, at the Gate, parleying with my Father, who stood in an offensive Attitude, and woulde not let him in. I coulde catch such Fragments as, "But, Sir—" "What! in such Weather "as this?" "Nay, it had not overcast "when I started." "Tis foul enough now, "then—" "Let me but have speech of "my Mistress." "You crosse not my "Threshold." "Nay, Sir, if but to give "her this Letter:"—and turning his Head, I was avised of its being *Hubert*, olde Mr. *Milton's* Man; doubtless sent by my Husband to fetch me. Seeing my Father raise his Hand in angrie Action (his Riding-whip being in it,) I hasted down as fast as I coulde, to prevent Mischiefe, as well as to get my Letter; but unhappilie, not soe fleetlie as to see more than *Hubert's* flying Skirts as he galloped from the Gate, with the led Horse by the Bridle; while my Father, flinging

flinging downe the torne Letter, walked passionately away. I clasped my Hands, and stood mazed for a While,—was then avised to piece the Letter, but could not; onlie making out such Words as “Sweet *Moll*,” in my Husband’s Writing.

1643.

*Rose* came this Morning, through Rain and Mire, at some Risk as well as much Inconvenience, to intreat of me, even with Teares, not to vex Mr. *Milton* by anie farther Delays, but to return to him as soon as possible. Kind Soule, her Affection toucht me, and I assured her the more readilie I intended to return Home as soone as I coulde, which was not yet, my Father having taken the Matter into his own Hands, and permitting me noe Escort; but that I questioned not, Mr. *Milton* was onlie awaiting the Weather to settle, to fetch me himselfe. That he will doe so, is my firm Persuasion. Meanwhile, I make it my Duty to joyn with some Attempt at  
Cheerfullenesse

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Cheerfullenesse in the Amusements of others, to make my Father's Confinement to the House less irksome; and have in some Measure succeeded.

Noe Sighte nor Tidings of Mr. *Milton*. —I am uneasie, frighted at myself, and wish I had never left him, yet hurte at the Neglect. *Hubert*, being a crabbed Temper, made Mischief on his Return, I fancy. *Father* is vexed, methinks, at his owne Passion, and hath never, directlie, spoken, in my Hearing, of what passed; but rayleth continuallie agaynst Rebels and Roundheads. As to *Mother*, —Ah me!

Oct. 24.

Thro' dank and miry Lanes and Bye-roads with *Robin*, to *Sheepscote*.

Waiting for *Rose* in Mr. *Agnew's* small Studdy, where she mostlie sitteth with him, oft acting as his Amanuensis, was avised to take up a printed Sheet of Paper that lay on the Table; but finding it to be of *Latin* Versing, was about  
to

to laye it downe agayn, when *Rose* came in. She changed Colour, and in a faltering Voice sayd, "Ah, *Cousin*, do you "know what that 'is? One of your "Husband's Prooffe Sheets. I woulde "that it coulde interest you in like "manner as it hath me." Made her noe Answer, laying it aside unconcernedlie, but secretlie felt, as I have oft done before, how stupid it is not to know *Latin*, and resolved to get *Robin* to teach me. He is no greate Scholar himselfe, soe will not shame me.—I am wearie of hearing of War and Politicks; soe will try Studdy for a While, and see if 'twill cure this dull Payn at my Heart.

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*Robin* and I have shut ourselves up for three Hours dailie, in the small Book-room, and have made fayre Progresse. He liketh his Office of Tutor mightilie.

Oct. 28.

My Lessons are more crabbed, or I  
am

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am more dull and inattentive, for I cannot fix my Minde on my Book, and am secretlie wearie. *Robin* wearies too. But I will not give up as yet; the more soe as in this quiete Studdy I am out of Sighte and Hearinge of sundrie young officers *Dick* is continuallie bringing over from *Oxford*, who spend manie Hours with him in Countrie-Sports, and then come into the House, hungry, thirstie, noisie, and idle. I know Mr. *Milton* woulde not like them.

—Surelie he will come soone?—I sayd to *Father* last Night, I wanted to hear from home. He sayd, “Home! “Dost call yon Taylor’s Shop your “Home?” soe ironicalle that I was shamed to say more.

Woulde that I had never married! —then coulde I enjoy my Childhoode’s Home. Yet I knew not its Value before I quitted it, and had even a stupid Pleasure in anticipating another. Ah me! had I loved Mr. *Milton* more,  
perhaps



perhaps I might better have endured the Taylor's Shop.

1643.

*Sheepscote, Nov. 20.*

Annoyed by *Dick's* Companions, I prayed *Father* to let me stay awhile with *Rose*; and gaining his Consent, came over here Yester-morn, without thinking it needfulle to send Notice, which was perhaps inconsiderate. -But she received me with Kisses and Words of Tenderness, though less Smiling than usualle, and eagerlie accepted mine offered Visitt. Then she ran off to find *Roger*, and I heard them talk earnestlie in a low Voice before they came in. His face was grave, even stern, when he entred, but he held out his Hand, and sayd, "Mistress *Milton*, you "are welcome! how is it with you? "and how was Mr. *Milton* when he "wrote to you last?" I answered brieflie, he was well: then came a Silence, and then *Rose* took me to my Chamber,

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Chamber, which was sweet with Laven-  
der, and its Hangings of the whitest.  
It reminded me too much of my first  
Week of Marriage, soe I resolved to  
think not at all lest I shoulde be bad  
Companie, but cheer up and be gay.  
Soe I askt *Rose* a thousand Questions  
about her Dairie and Bees, laught much  
at Dinner, and told Mr. *Agnew* sundrie  
of the merrie Sayings of *Dick* and his  
*Oxford* Friends. And, for my Reward,  
when we were afterwards apart, I heard  
him tell *Rose* (by Reason of the Walls  
being thin) that however she might  
regard me for old Affection's Sake, he  
thought he had never knowne soe un-  
promising a Character. This made me  
dulle enoughe all the rest of the Evening,  
and repent having come to *Sheepscote* :  
however, he liked me the better for being  
quiete : and *Rose*, being equallie chekt,  
we sewed in Silence while he read to us  
the first Division of *Spenser's Legend*  
*of Holinesse*, about *Una* and the Knight,  
and

and how they got sundered. This led to much serious, yet not unpleasing, Discourse, which lasted till Supper. For the first Time at *Sheepscote*, I could not eat, which Mr. *Agnew* observing, prest me to take Wine, and *Rose* would start up to fetch some of her Preserves; but I chekt her with a Motion, not being quite able to speak; for their being soe kind made the Teares ready to starte, I knew not why.

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Family Prayers, after Supper, rather too long; yet though I could not keep up my Attention, they seemed to spread a Calm and a Peace alle about, that extended even to me; and though, after I had undressed, I sat a long While in a Maze, and bethought me how piteous a Creature I was, yet, once layed down, I never sank into deeper, more composing Sleep.

This Morning, *Rose* exclaimed, "Dear  
" *Roger!* onlie think! *Moll* has begun  
" to

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“to learn *Latin* since she returned to  
 “*Forest Hill*, thinking to surprise Mr.  
 “*Milton* when they meet.” “She will  
 “not onlie surprise, but *please* him,”  
 returned dear *Rdger*, taking my Hand  
 very kindlie ; “I can onlie say, I hope  
 “they will meet long before she can  
 “read his *Poemata*, unless she learns  
 “much faster than most People.” I  
 replied, I learned very slowly, and  
 wearied *Robin’s* Patience ; on which  
*Rose*, kissing me, cried, “You will  
 “never wearie mine ; soe, if you please,  
 “deare *Moll*, we will go to our Lessons  
 “here everie Morning, and it may be  
 “that I shall get you through the  
 “Grammar faster than *Robin* can. If  
 “we come to anie Difficultie we shall  
 “refer it to *Roger*.”

Now, Mr. *Agnew’s* Looks exprest such  
 Pleasure with both, that it were difficult  
 to tell which felt the most elated ; soe  
 calling me deare *Moll* (he had hitherto  
 Mistress *Miltoned* me ever since I sett

Foot

Foot in his House), he sayd he would not interrupt our Studdies, though he should be within Call, and soe left us. I had not felt so happy since *Father's* Birthday; and, though *Rose* kept me close to my Book for two Hours, I found her a far less irksome Tutor than deare *Robin*. Then she went away, singing, to make *Roger's* favourite Dish, and afterwards we tooke a brisk Walke, and came Home hungrie enoughe to Dinner.

There is a daily Beauty in *Rose's* Life, that I not onlie admire, but am readie to envy. Oh! if Mr. *Milton* lived but in the poorest House in the Countrie, methinks I could be very happy with him.

Chancing to make the above Remark to *Rose*, she cried, "And why not be "happy with him in *AldersgateStreet*?" I briefly replied that he must get the House first, before it were possible to  
tell

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Bedtime.

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tell whether I could be happy there or not. *Rose* stared, and exclaimed, "Why, where do you suppose him to be now?" "Where but at the Taylor's in *Bride's Churchyard?*" I replied. She clasped her Hands with a Look I shall never forget, and exclaimed in a Sort of vehement Passion, "Oh, *Cousin, Cousin*, how you throw your own Happiness away! How awfully a Pause must have taken place in your Intercourse with the Man whom you promised to abide by till Death, since you know not that he has long since taken Possession of his new Home; that he strove to have it ready for you at *Michaelmasse!*"

Doubtless I lookt no less surprised than I felt;—a sudden Prick at the Heart prevented Speech; but it shot across my Mind that I had made out the Words "*Aldersgate*" and "new Home," in the Fragments of the Letter my Father had torn. *Rose*, misjudging my Silence, burst forth anew with, "Oh, *Cousin!*"

“ *Cousin ! Cousin !* could anie Home,  
 “ however dull and noisosome, drive me  
 “ from *Roger Agnew ?* Onlie think of  
 “ what you are doing !—of what you are  
 “ leaving undone !—of what you are  
 “ preparing against yourself ! To put  
 “ the Wickednesse of a selfish Course  
 “ out of the Account, onlie think of its  
 “ Mellancholie, its Miserie, —destitute of  
 “ alle the sweet, bright, fresh Well-  
 “ springs of Happinesse ;—unblest by  
 “ *God !* ”

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Here *Rose* wept passionatelie, and  
 claspt her Arms about me ; but, when  
 I began to speak, and to tell her of  
 much that had made me miserable, she  
 hearkened in motionlesse Silence, till I  
 told her that *Father* had torn the Letter  
 and beaten the Messenger. Then she  
 cried, “ Oh, I see now what may and  
 “ shall be done ! *Roger* shall be Peace-  
 “ maker,” and ran off with Joyfulnesse ;  
 I not withholding her. But I can never  
 be joyfulle more—he cannot be Day’s-  
 man

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man betwixt us now—'tis alle too late !

Nov. 28.

Now that I am at *Forest Hill* agayn, I will essay to continue my Journalling.—

Mr. *Agnew* was out; and though a keene wintry Wind was blowing, and *Rose* was suffering from Colde, yet she went out to listen for his Horse's Feet at the Gate, with onlie her Apron cast over her Head. Shortlie, he returned; and I heard him say in a troubled Voice, "Alle are in Arms at *Forest Hill*." I felt so greatlie shocked as to neede to sit downe instead of running forthe to learn the News. I supposed the parliamentarian Soldiers had advanced, unexpectedlie, upon *Oxford*. His next Words were, "*Dick* is coming for her at Noone—poor Soul, I know not what She will doe—her Father will trust her noe longer with you and me." Then I saw them both passe the Window,



dow, slowlie pacing together, and hastened forth to joyn them; but they had turned into the pleached Alley, their Backs towards me; and both in such earnest and apparentlie private Communication, that I dared not interrupt them till they turned aboute, which was not for some While; for they stood for some Time at the Head of the Alley, still with theire Backs to me, *Rose's* Hair blowing in the cold Wind; and once or twice she seemed to put her kerchief to her Eyes.

Now, while I stood mazed and uncertain, I hearde a distant Clatter of Horse's Feet, on the hard Road a good Way off, and coulde descrie *Dick* coming towards *Sheepscote*. *Rose* saw him too, and commenced running towards me; Mr. *Agnew* following with long Strides. *Rose* drew me back into the House, and sayd, kissing me, "Dearest *Moll*, I am "soe sorry; *Roger* hath seen your *Father* "this Morn, and he will on no Account  
" spare

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“ spare you to us anie longer ; and *Dick* “ is coming to fetch you even now.” I sayd, “ Is *Father* ill?” “ Oh no,” replied *Mr. Agnew*, then coming up ; “ He is “ not ill, but he is perturbed at something “ which has occurred ; and, in Truth, soe “ am I.—But remember, *Mistress Milton*, “ remember, dear *Cousin*, that when you “ married, your *Father’s* Guardianship “ of you passed into the Hands of your “ Husband—your Husband’s House was “ thenceforthe your Home ; and in quit- “ ting it you committed a Fault you may “ yet repaire, though this offensive Act “ has made the difficultie much greater.” “ —Oh, what has happened ?” I impatiently cried. — Just then, *Dick* comes in with his usual blunt Salutations, and then cries, “ Well, *Moll*, are you ready “ to goe back ? ” “ Why should I be ? ” I sayd, “ when I am so happy here ? unless *Father* is ill, or *Mr. Agnew* and “ *Rose* are tired of me.” They both interrupted, there was nothing they so much

much desired, at this present, as that I shoulde prolong my Stay. "And you "know, *Dick*," I added, "that *Forest Hill* "is not soe pleasant to me just now as it "hath commonlie beene, by Reason of "your *Oxford* Companions." He brieflie sayd, I neede not mind that, they were coming no more to the House, *Father* had decreed it. "And you know well "enough, *Moll*, that what *Father* decrees, "must be, and he hath decreed that you "must come Home now; soe no more "Ado, I pray you, but fetch your Cloak "and Hood, and the Horses shall come "round, for 'twill be late ere we reach "Home." "Nay, you must dine here at "all Events," sayd *Rose*; "I know, *Dick*, "you love roast Pork." Soe *Dick* relented. Soe *Rose*, turning to me, prayed me to bid *Cicely* hasten Dinner; the which I did, tho' thinking it strange *Rose* should not goe herself. But, as I returned, I hearde her say, "Not a Word "of it, dear *Dick*, at the least, till after  
"Dinner,

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“Dinner, lest you spoil her Appetite.” Soe *Dick* sayd he shoulde goe and look after the Horses. I sayd then, brisklie, “I see somewhat is the Matter—pray tell me what it is.” But *Rose* looked quite dull, and walked to the Window. Then *Mr. Agnew* sayd, “You seem as dissatisfied to leave us, *Cousin*, as we are to lose you; and yet you are going back to *Forest Hill*—to that Home in which you will doubtless be happy to live all your Days.”—“At *Forest Hill*?” I sayd, “Oh no! I hope not.” “And why?” sayd he quicklie. I hung my Head, and muttered, “I hope some Daye, to goe back to *Mr. Milton*.” “And why not at once?” sayd he. I sayd, “*Father* would not let me.” “Nay, that is Childish,” he answered, “your *Father* could not hinder you if you wanted not the Mind to goe—it was your first seeming so loth to return, that made him think you unhappie and refuse to part with you.” I sayd, “And what if  
“ I

“I were unhappie?” He paused; and knew not at the Moment what Answer to make, but shortlie replied by another Question, “What cause had you to be “soe?” I sayd, “That was more easily “askt than answered, even if there were “anie Neede I should answer it, or he “had anie Right to ask it.” He cried in an Accent of Tenderness that still wrings my Heart to remember, “Oh, “question not the Right! I only wish “to make you happy. Were you not “happy with Mr. *Milton* during the “Week you spent together here at “*Sheepscote*?” Thereat I could not refrain from bursting into Tears. *Rose* now sprang forward; but Mr. *Agnew* sayd, “Let her weep, let her weep, it “will do her good.” Then alle at once it occurred to me that my Husband was awaiting me at Home, and I cried, “Oh, “is Mr. *Milton* at *Forest Hill*?” and felt my Heart full of Gladness. Mr. *Agnew* answered, “Not soe, not soe, poor  
“*Moll* :”

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“*Moll*:” and, looking up at him, I saw him wiping his Brow, though the Daye was soe chill. “As well tell her now,” sayd he to *Rose*; and then taking my Hand, “Oh, Mrs. *Milton*, can you wonder that your Husband should be angry? How can you wonder at anie Evil that may result from the Provocation you have given him? What *Marvell*, that since you cast him off, all the sweet Fountains of his Affections should be embittered, and that he should retaliate by seeking a Separation, and even a Divorce?”—There I stopt him with an outcry of “Divorce?” “Even soe,” he most mournfully replyd, “and I seeke not to excuse him, since two Wrongs make not a Right.” “But,” I cried, passionately weeping, “I have given him noe Cause; my Heart has never for a Moment strayed to another, nor does he, I am sure, suspect it.” “Ne’ertheless,” rejoyned Mr. *Agnew*, “he is soe  
“aggrieved

“aggrieved and chafed, that he has  
“followed up what he considers your  
“Breach of the Marriage Contract by  
“writing and publishing a Book on  
“Divorce; the Tenor of which coming  
“to your Father’s Ears, has violently  
“incensed him. And now, dear *Cousin*,  
“having, by your Waywardness, kindled  
“this Flame, what remains for you but  
“to—nay, hear me, hear me, *Moll*, for  
“*Dick* is coming in, and I may not let  
“him hear me urge you to the onlie  
“Course that can regayn your Peace—  
“Mr. *Milton* is still your Husband;  
“each of you have now Something to  
“forgive; do you be the firste; nay,  
“seeke *his* Forgivenessse, and you shall  
“be happier than you have been yet.”

—But I was weeping without Con-  
troule; and *Dick* coming in, and with  
*Dick* the Dinner, I askt to be excused,  
and soe soughte my Chamber, to weep  
there without Restraynt or Witnessse.  
Poor *Rose* came up, as soon as she  
could

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could leave the Table, and told me she had eaten as little as I, and would not even presse me to eat. But she caresst me and comforted me, and urged in her owne tender Waye alle that had beene sayd by Mr. *Agnew*; even protesting that if she were in my Place, she would not goe back to *Forest Hill*, but straight to *London*, to entreat with Mr. *Milton* for his Mercy. But I told her I could not do that, even had I the Means for the Journey; for that my Heart was turned against the man who could, for the venial Offence of a young Wife, in abiding too long with her old Father, not onlie cast her off from his Love; but hold her up to the World's Blame and Scorn, by making their domestic Quarrel the Matter for a printed attack. *Rose* sayd, "I admit he is wrong, but indeed, "indeed, *Moll*, you are wrong too, and "you were wrong *first*:" and she sayd this soe often, that at length we came to crosser Words; when *Dick*, calling  
to



to me from below, would have me make haste, which I was glad to doe, and left *Sheepscote* less regretfullie than I had expected. *Rose* kisst me with her gravest Face. Mr. *Agnew* put me on my Horse, and sayd; as he gave me the Rein, "Now think! now think! even "yet!" and then, as I silently rode off, "God bless you!"

I held down my Head; but, at the Turn of the Road, lookt back, and saw him and *Rose* watching us from the Porch. *Dick* cried, "I am righte glad "we are off at last, for *Father* is down- "right crazie aboute this Businesse, and "mistrustfulle of *Agnew's* Influence over "you,"—and would have gone on railing, but I bade him for *Pitie's* sake be quiete.

The Effects of my owne Follie, the Losse of Home, Husband, Name, the Opinion of the *Agnews*, the Opinion of the Worlde, rose up agaynst me, and almost drove me mad. And, just as I was

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was thinking I had better lived out my Dayes and dyed earlie in *Bride's Church-yard* than that alle this should have come about, the suddain Recollection of what *Rose* had that Morning tolde me, which soe manie other Thoughts had driven out of my Head,—viz. that Mr. *Milton* had, in his Desire to please me, while I was onlie bent on pleasing myself, been secretly striving to make readie the *Aldersgate Street* House agaynst my Return,—soe overcame me, that I wept as I rode along. Nay, at the Corner of a branch Road, had a Mind to beg *Dick* to let me goe to *London*; but a Glance at his dogged Countenance sufficed to foreshow my Answer.

Half dead with Fatigue and Griefe when I reached Home, the tender Embraces of my Father and Mother completed the Overthrowe of my Spiritts. I tooke to my Bed; and this is the first Daye I have left it; nor will they let me

me send for *Rose*, nor even tell her I am ill.

1643.

The new Year opens drearilie, on Affairs both publick and private. The Loaf parted at Breakfast this Morning, which, as the Saying goes, is a Sign of Separation ; but *Mother* onlie sayd 'twas because it was badly kneaded, and chid *Margery*. She hath beene telling me, but now, how I mighte have 'scaped all my Troubles, and seene as much as I woulde of her and *Father*, and yet have contented Mr. *Milton* and beene counted a good Wife. Noe Advice so ill to bear as that which comes too late.

1644.

March 25th.

I am sick of this journalling, soe shall onlie put downe the Date of *Robin's* leaving Home. *Lord* have mercy on him, and keep him in Safetie ! This is a shorte Prayer ; therefore, easier to be often repeated. When he kissed me, he whispered, "*Moll*, pray for me."

*Father*

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March 29th.

*Father* does not seeme to miss *Robin* much, tho' he dailie drinks his Health after that of the King. Perhaps he did not miss me anie more when I was in *London*, though it was true and naturall enough he should like to see me agayn. We should have beene used to our Separation by this Time; there would have beene Nothing corroding in it. . . .

I pray for *Robin* everie Night. Since he went, the House has lost its Sunshine. When I was soe anxious to return to *Forest Hill*, I never counted on his leaving it.

Oh me, what would I give to see the Skirts of Mr. *Milton's* Garments agayn! My Heart is sick unto Death. I have been reading some of my *Journall*, and tearing out much childish Nonsense at the Beginning; but coulde not destroy the painfull Records of the last Year. How unhappy a Creature am I!—wearie, wearie of my Life, yet no Ways inclined

inclined for Death. *Lord* have Mercy upon me !

1644.

I spend much of my Time, now, in the Book-room, and, though I essay not to pursue the *Latin*, I read much *English*, at the least, more than I ever did in my Life before; but often I fancy I am reading when I am onlie dreaming. *Oxford* is far too gay a Place for me now ever to goe neare it, but my Brothers are much there, and *Father* in his Farm, and *Mother* in her Kitchen; and the Neighbours, when they call, look on me strangelie, so that I have no Love for them. How different is *Rose's* holy, seclused, yet cheerfulle Life at *Sheepscote* ! She hath a Nurserie now, soe cannot come to me, and *Father* likes not I should goe to her.

April 3rd.

They say their Majestyes' Parting at *Abingdon* was very sorrowfulle and tender. The *Lord* send them better Times !

5th.

1644.

Times! The Queen is to my Mind a most charming Lady, and well worthy of his Majesty's Affection; yet it seems to me amisse, that thro' her Influence, last Summer, the Opportunitie of Pacification was lost. But she was elated, and naturallie enoughe, at her personall Successes from the Time of her landing. To me, there seems Nothing soe good as Peace. I know, indeede, Mr. *Milton* holds that there may be such Things as a holy War and a cursed Peace.

April 10th.

*Father*, having a Hoarseness, hath deputed me, of late, to read the Morning and Evening Prayers. How beautifulle is our Liturgie! I grudge at the Puritans for having abolished it; and though I felt not its comprehensive Fullnesse before I married, nor indeed till now, yet I wearied to Death in *London* at the puritanicall Ordinances and Conscience-meetings and extempore Prayers, wherein it was soe oft the Speaker's  
Care

Care to show Men how godly he was, rather than confess to *God* how sinfull he was. Nay, I think Mr. *Milton* altogether wrong in the View he takes of praying to *God* in other Men's Words; for doth he not doe soe, everie Time he followeth the Sense of another Man's extempore Prayer, wherein he is more at his Mercy and Caprice than when he hath a printed Form set down, wherein he sees what is coming?

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Walking in the Home-close this Morning, it occurred to me that Mr. *Milton* intended bringing me to *Forest Hill* about this Time; and that if I had abided patientlie with him through the Winter, we might now have beene both here happily together; untroubled by that Sting which now poisons everie Enjoyment of mine, and perhaps of his. *Lord*, be merciful to me a *Sinner*!

June 8th.

Just after writing the above, I was in  
the

June 23rd.

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the Garden, gathering a few Coronation Flowers and Sops-in-Wine, and thinking they were of deeper Crimson at *Sheepscote*, and wondering what *Rose* was just then about, and whether had I beene born in her Place, I shoulde have beene as goode and happy as she,—when *Harry* came up, looking somewhat grave. I sayd, “What is the Matter?” He gave answer, “*Rose* hath lost her “Child.” Oh!—that we should live but a two Hours’ Journey apart, and that she coulde lose a Child three Months olde *whom I had never seene!*

I ran to *Father*, and never left off praying him to let me goe to her till he consented.

—What, and if I had begged as hard, at the firste, to goe back to *Mr. Milton*? might he not have consented *then*?

. . . So *Harry* took me; and as we drew neare *Sheepscote*, I was avised to think how grave, how barely friendlie had beene our last Parting; and to ponder,



der, would *Rose* make me welcome now? The Infant, *Harry* tolde me, had beene dead some Dayes; and, as we came in Sight of the little grey old Church, we saw a Knot of People coming out of the Churchyard, and guessed the Baby had just been buried. Soe it proved—Mr. *Agnew's* House-door stood ajar; and when we tapped softlie and *Cicely* admitted us, we could see him standing by *Rose*, who was sitting on the Ground and crying as if she would not be comforted. When she hearde my Voice, she started up, flung her Arms about me, crying more bitterlie than before, and I cried too; and Mr. *Agnew* went away with *Harry*. Then *Rose* sayd to me, “You must not leave me agayn.” . . .

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. . . . In the Cool of the Evening, when *Harry* had left us, she took me into the Churchyarde, and scattered the little Grave with Flowers; and then continued sitting beside it on the Grasse, quiete, but not comfortlesse. I am  
avised

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advised to think she prayed. Then Mr. *Agnew* came forth and sate on a flat Tombstone hard by; and without one Word of Introduction took out his *Psalter*, and commenced reading the Psalms for that Evening's Service; to wit, the 41st, the 42d, the 43de; in a low solemne Voice; and methoughte I never in my Life hearde aniething to equall it in the Way of Consolation. *Rose's* heavie Eyes graduallie lookt up from the Ground into her Husband's Face, and thence up to Heaven. After this, he read, or rather repeated, the Collect at the end of the Buriall Service, putting this Expression,—“As our Hope  
 “is, this our deare Infant doth.” Then he went on to say in a soothing Tone,  
 “There hath noe Misfortune happened  
 “to us, but such as is common to the Lot  
 “of alle Men. We are alle Sinners,  
 “even to the youngest, fayrest, and  
 “seeminglie purest among us; and Death  
 “entered the World by Sin, and constitu-  
 “ted

“ted as we are, we would not, even if we  
“could, dispense with Death. For, where  
“doth it convey us? From this burthen-  
“some miserable World, into the generall  
“Assemblie of *Christ's* First-born, to  
“be united with the Spiritts of the  
“Just made perfect, to partake of everie  
“Enjoyment which in this World is  
“unconnected with Sin, together with  
“others that are unknowne and un-  
“speakable. And there, we shall agayn  
“have *Bodies* as well as Soules; Eyes to  
“see, but not to shed Tears; Voices to  
“speak and sing, not to utter Lamenta-  
“tions; Hands, to doe *God's* Work;  
“Feet, and it may be, Wings, to carry  
“us on His Errands. Such will be the  
“Blessedness of His glorified Saints;  
“even of those who, having been Ser-  
“vants of Satan till the eleventh Hour,  
“laboured penitentlie and diligentlie for  
“their heavenlie Master one Hour before  
“Sunset; but as for those who, dying in  
“mere Infancie, never committed actuall  
“Sin,

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“Sin, they follow the Lamb whither-  
“soever He goeth! Oh, think of this,  
“dear *Rose*, and sorrow not as those  
“without Hope; for be assured, your  
“Child hath more reall Reason to be  
“grieved for you, than you for *him*.”

With this, and like Discourse, that distilled like the Dew, or the small Rain on the tender Grasse, did *Roger Agnew* comfort his Wife, until the Moon had risen. Likewise he spake to us of those who lay buried arounde, how one had died of a broken Heart, another of sudden Joy, another had let Patience have her perfect Work through Years of lingering Disease. Then we walked slowlie and composedlie Home, and ate our Supper peacefullie, *Rose* not refusing to eat, though she took but little.

Since that Evening, she hath, at Mr. *Agnew's* Wish, gone much among the Poor, reading to one, working for another, carrying Food and Medicine to another; and in this I have borne her  
Companie.

Companie. I like it well. Methinks how pleasant and seemlie are the Duties of a country Minister's Wife! a God-fearing Woman, that is, who considereth the Poor and the Needy, instead of aiming to be frounced and purfled like her richest Neighbours. Mr. *Agnew* was reading to us, last Night, of *Bernard Gilpin*—he of whom the *Lord Burleigh* said, "Who can blame that Man for "not accepting a Bishoprick?" How charmed were we with the Description of the Simplicitie and Hospitalitie of his Method of living at *Houghton!*—There is another Place of nearlie the same Name, in *Buckinghamshire*—not *Houghton*, but *Horton*, . . . . where one Mr. *John Milton* spent five of the best Years of his Life,—and where methinks his Wife could have been happier with him than in *Bride's Churchyarde*. But it profits not to wish and to will.—What was to be, had Need to be, soe there's an End.

Mr.

1644.  
Aug. 1st.

Mr. *Agnew* said to me this Morning, somewhat gravelie, "I observe, *Cousin*, "you seem to consider yourself the Victim "of Circumstances." "And am I not?" I replied. "No," he answered, "Circumstance is a false God, unrecognised "by the Christian, who contemns him, "and makes him though a subborn yet, "a profitable Servant."—"That may be "alle very grand for a Man to doe," I sayd. "Very grand, but very feasible, "for a Woman as well as a man," rejoined Mr. *Agnew*, "and we shall be "driven to the Wall alle our Lives, unless we have this victorious Struggle "with Circumstances. I seldom allude, "*Cousin*, to yours, which are almoste too "delicate for me to meddle with; and "yet I hardlie feele justified in letting "soe many Opportunities escape. Do "I offend? or may I go on?—Onlie "think, then, how voluntarilie you have "placed yourself in your present uncomfortable Situation. The Tree cannot  
" resist

“ resist the graduall Growth of the Moss  
“ upon it ; but you might, anie Day, anie  
“ Hour, have freed yourself from the  
“ equallie gradual Formation of the Net  
“ that has enclosed you at last. You  
“ entered too hastilie into your firste  
“ —nay, let that pass,—you gave too  
“ shorte a Triall of your new Home before  
“ you became disgusted with it. Admit  
“ it to have beene dull, even unhealth-  
“ fulle, were you justified in forsaking  
“ it at a Month’s End ? But your Hus-  
“ band gave you Leave of Absence,  
“ though obtayned under false Pretences.  
“ When you found them to be false,  
“ should you not have cleared yourself  
“ to him of Knowledge of the Deceit ?  
“ Then your Leave, soe obtayned, ex-  
“ pired—shoulde you not have returned  
“ then ?—Your Health and Spiritts were  
“ recruited ; your Husband wrote to re-  
“ claim you—shoulde you not have re-  
“ turned then ? He provided an Escort,  
“ whom your Father beat and drove  
“ away.

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“away,—If you had insisted on going  
 “to your Husband, might you not have  
 “gone *then*? Oh, *Cousin*, you dare not  
 “look up to Heaven and say you have  
 “been the Victim of Circumstances.”

I made no Answer; onlie felt much  
 moven, and very angrie. I sayd, “If I  
 “wished to goe back, Mr. *Milton* woulde  
 “not receive me now.”

“Will you try?” sayd *Roger*. “Will  
 “you but let me try? Will you let  
 “me write to him?”

I had a Mind to say “Yes.”—In-  
 steade, I answered “No.”

“Then there’s an End,” cried he  
 sharplie. “Had you made but one fayre  
 “Triall, whether successulle or noe, I  
 “coulde have been satisfied—no, not  
 “satisfied, but I woulde have esteemed  
 “you, coulde have taken your Part.  
 “As it is, the less I say just now,  
 “perhaps the better. Forgive me for  
 “having spoken at alle.”

—Afterwards, I hearde him say to  
*Rose*



Rose of me, "I verilie believe there is  
 "Nothing in her on which to make a  
 "permanent Impression. I verilie think  
 "she loves everie one of those long Curls  
 "of hers more than she loves Mr. *Milton*."

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(Note:—I will cut them two Inches  
 shorter to-night. And they will grow  
 all the faster.)

. . . . Oh, my sad Heart, *Roger  
 Agnew* hath pierced you at last!

I was moved more than he thought,  
 by what he had sayd in the Morning,  
 and, in writing down the Heads of his  
 Speech, to kill Time, a kind of Resent-  
 ment at myselfe came over me, unlike  
 to what I had ever felt before; in spite  
 of my Folly about my Curls. Seeking  
 for some Trifle in a Bag that had not  
 been shaken out since I brought it from  
*London*, out tumbled a Key with curious  
 Wards—I knew it at once for one that  
 belonged to a certayn Algum-wood  
 Casket Mr. *Milton* had Recourse to  
 dailie, because he kept small Change in  
 it;

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it; and I knew not I had brought it away! 'Twas worked in Grotesque, the Casket, by *Benvenuto*, for *Clement* the Seventh, who for some Reason would not have it; and so it came somehow to *Clementillo*, who gave it to Mr. *Milton*. Thought I, how uncomfortable the Loss of this key must have made him! he must have needed it a hundred Times! even if he hath bought a new Casket, I will answer for it he habituallie goes agayn and agayn to the old one, and then he remembers that he lost the Key the same Day that he lost his Wife. I heartily wish he had it back. Ah, but he feels not the one Loss as he feels the other. Nay, but it is as well that one of them, tho' the Lesser, should be repaired. 'Twill show Sign of Grace, my thinking of him, and may open the Way, if *God* wills, to some Interchange of Kindnesse, however fleeting.

Soe I soughte out Mr. *Agnew*, tapping at his Studdy Doore. He sayd,  
"Come

“Come in,” drylie enoughe; and there were he and *Rose* reading a Letter. I sayd, “I want you to write for me to “*Mr. Milton.*” He gave a sour Look, as much as to say he disliked the Office; which threw me back, as ’Twere; he having so lately proposed it himself. *Rose’s* Eyes, however, dilated with sweete Pleasure, as she lookt from one to the other of us.

1644.

“Well,—I fear ’tis too late,” sayd he at length reluctantlie, I might almost say grufflie,—“what am I to write?”

“To tell him I have this Key,” I made Answer faltering.

“That Key!” cried he.

“Yes, the Key of his Algum-wood Casket, which I knew not I had, and which I think he must miss dailie.”

He lookt at me with the utmost Impatience. “And is that alle?” he sayd.

“Yes, alle,” I sayd trembling.

“And have you nothing more to tell “him?” sayd he.

“No—”

1644.

“No—” after a Pause, I replied.  
*Rose's* Countenance fell.

“Then you must ask some one else  
 “to write for you, *Mrs. Milton,*” burste  
 forthe *Roger Agnew,* “unless you  
 “choose to write for yourself. I will  
 “have neither Part nor Lot in it.”

I burste forthe into Teares.

—“No, *Rose,* no,” repeated *Mr. Agnew,*  
 putting aside his Wife, who woulde have  
 interceded for me,—“her Teares have  
 “noe Effect on me now—they proceed  
 “not from a contrite Heart, they are  
 “the Teares of a Child that cannot  
 “brook to be chidden for the Wayward-  
 “nesse in which it persists.”

“You doe me Wrong everie Way,”  
 I sayd; “I came to you willing and  
 “desirous to doe what you yourselfe  
 “woulde, this Morning, have had me  
 “doe.”

“But in how strange a Way!” cried  
 he. “At a Time when anie Renewal of  
 “your Intercourse requires to be con-  
 “ducted

“ ducted with the utmost Delicacy, and  
“ even with more Show of Concession on  
“ your Part than, an Hour ago, I should  
“ have deemed needfulle,—to propose  
“ an abrupt, trivial Communication  
“ about an old Key ! ”

1644.

“ It needed not to have been abrupt, ”  
I said, “ nor yet trivial ; for I meant it  
“ to have been exprest kindlie. ”

“ You said not that before, ” answered  
he.

“ Because you gave me not Time.—  
“ Because you chid me and frightened  
“ me. ”

He stood silent, some While, upon  
this ; grave, yet softer, and mechan-  
callie playing with the Key, which he  
had taken from my Hand, *Rose* look-  
ing in his Face anxiously. At lengthe,  
to disturbe his Reverie, she playfullie  
tooke it from him, saying, in School-girl  
Phrase,—

“ This is the Key of the Kingdom ! ”

“ Of the Kingdom of Heaven, it  
“ mighte

1644.

“mighte be!” exclaimed *Roger*, “if we  
 “knew, how to use it arighte! If we  
 “knew but how to fit it to the Wards of  
 “*Milton’s* Heart!—there’s the Difficul-  
 “tie . . . . a greater one, poor *Moll*,  
 “than you know; for hithertoe, alle the  
 “reluctance has been on your Part.  
 “But now . . . .”

“What now?” I anxiously askt.

“We were talking of you but as you  
 “rejoyned us,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*, “and I  
 “was telling *Rose* that hithertoe I had  
 “considered the onlie Obstacle to a Re-  
 “union arose from a false Impression of  
 “your own, that Mr. *Milton* coulde not  
 “make you happy. But now I have  
 “beene led to the Conclusion that you  
 “cannot make *him* soe, which increases  
 “the Difficultie.”

After a Pause, I said, “What makes  
 “you think so?”

“You and he have made me think  
 “soe,” he replied. “First for yourself,  
 “dear *Moll*, putting aside for a Time  
 “the

1644

“the Consideration of your Youth,  
 “Beauty, Franknesse, Mirthfulnesse,  
 “and a certayn girlish Drollerie and  
 “Mischiefe that are all very well in fit-  
 “ting Time and Place,—what remains  
 “in you for a Mind like *John Milton’s*  
 “to repose upon? what Stabilitie? what  
 “Sympathie? what steadfast Principle?  
 “You take no Pains to apprehend and  
 “relish his favourite Pursuits; you care  
 “not for his wounded Feelings, you  
 “consult not his Interests, anie more  
 “than your owne Duty. Now, is such  
 “the Character to make *Milton* happy?”

“No one can answer that but himself,”

I replied, deeplie mortyfide.

“Well, he *has* answered it,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*, taking up the Letter he and *Rose* had beene reading when I interrupted them. . . . “You must know,  
 “*Cousin*, that his and my close Friend-  
 “ship hathe been a good deal interrup-  
 “ted by this Matter. ’Twas under my  
 “Roof you met. *Rose* had imparted to  
 “me

1644.

“ me much of her earlie Interest in you.  
 “ I fancied you had good Dispositions  
 “ which, under masterlie Trayning,  
 “ would ripen into noble Principles; and  
 “ therefore promoted your Marriage as  
 “ far as my Interest with your Father  
 “ had Weight. I own I was surprised  
 “ at his easilie obtayned Consent. . . .  
 “ but that *you*, once domesticated with  
 “ such a Man as *John Milton*, should  
 “ find your Home uninteresting, your  
 “ Affections free to stray back to your  
 “ owne Family, was what I had never  
 “ contemplated.”

Here I made a Show of taking the Letter, but he held it back.

“ No, *Moll*, you disappointed us everie  
 “ Way. And, for a Time, *Rose* and I  
 “ were so ashamed, *for* you rather than *of*  
 “ you, that we left noe Means neglected  
 “ to preserve your Place in your Hus-  
 “ band’s Regard. But you did not bear  
 “ us out; and then he beganne to take it  
 “ amisse that we upheld you. Soe then,  
 “ after



“after some warm and some cool Words,  
“our Correspondence languished, and  
“hath but now beene renewed.”

“He has written us a most kind Con-  
“dolence,” interrupted *Rose*, “on the  
“Death of our Baby.”

“Yes, most kindlie, most nobly ex-  
“prest,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*.; “but what  
“a Conclusion!”

And then, after this long Preamble,  
he offered me the Letter, the Beginning  
of which, tho' doubtlesse well enough, I  
marked not, being impatient to reach  
the latter Part; wherein I found myself  
spoken of soe bitterlie, soe harshlie, as  
that I too plainly saw *Roger Agnew*  
had not beene beside the Mark when he  
decided I could never make Mr. *Milton*  
happy. Payned and wounded Feeling  
made me lay aside the Letter without  
proffering another Word, and retreat  
without soe much as, a Sigh or a Sob  
into mine own Chamber; but noe longer  
could the Restraynt be maintained. I fell  
to

1644.

to weeping soe passionatelie that *Rose* prayed to come in, and condoled with me, and advised me, soe as that at length my Weeping abated, and I promised to return below when I shoulde have bathed mine Eyes, and smoothed my Hair; but I have not gone down yet.

Bedtime.

I think I shall send to *Father* to have me Home at the Beginning of next Week. *Rose* needes me not, now; and it cannot be pleasant to Mr. *Agnew* to see my sorrowfulle Face about the House. His reproofe and my Husband's together have riven my Heart; I think I shall never laugh agayn, nor smile but after a piteous Sorte; and soe People will cease to love me, for there is nothing in me of a graver Kind to draw their Affection; and soe I shall lead a moping Life unto the End of my Dayes.

—Luckilie for me, *Rose* hath much Sewing to doe; for she hath undertaken with great Energie her Labours  
for

for the Poore, and consequentlie spends less Time in her Husband's Study; and as I help her to the best of my Means, my Sewing hides my Lack of talking, and Mr. *Agnew* reads to us such Books as he deems entertayning; yet, half the Time I hear not what he reads. Still, I did not deeme so much Amusement could have been found in Books; and there are some of his that, if not soe cumbrous, I would fain borrow.

1644.

I have made up my Mind now, that I shall never see Mr. *Milton* more; and am resolved to submitt to it without another Tear.

Friday.

*Rose* sayd, this Morning, she was glad to see me more composed; and soe am I; but never was more miserable.

Mr. *Agnew's* religious Services at the End of the Week have alwaies more than usuall Matter and Meaninge in them

Saturday.  
night.

1644.

them. They are neither soe drowsy as those I have beene for manie Years accustomed to at Home, nor soe wearisome as to remind me of the *Puritans*. Were there manie such as he is in our Church, soe faithfulle, fervent, and thoughtfulle, methinks there would be fewer Schismatics ; but still there woulde be some, because there are alwaies some that like to be the uppermost.

. . . . . To-nighte, Mr. *Agnew's* Prayers went straight to my Heart ; and I privilie turned sundrie of his generall Petitions into particular ones, for myself and *Robin*, and also for Mr. *Milton*. This gave such unwonted Relief, that since I entered into my Closet, I have repeated the same particularlie ; one Request seeming to grow out of another, till I remained I know not how long on my Knees, and will bend them yet agayn, ere I go to Bed.

How sweetlie the Moon shines through my Casement to-night ! I am almoste  
 avised

avised to accede to *Rose's* Request of staying here to the End of the Month:— everie Thing here is soe peacefull; and *Forest Hill* is dull, now *Robin* is away.

1644.

How blessed a Sabbath!—Can it be, that I thought, onlie two Days back, I shoulde never know Peace agayn? Joy I may not, but Peace I can and doe. And yet nought hath amended, the unfortunate Condition of mine Affairs; but a different Colouring is caste upon them—the *Lord* grant that it may last! How hath it come soe, and how may it be preserved? This Morn, when I awoke, 'twas with a Sense of Relief such as we have when we miss some wearying bodilie Payn; a Feeling as, though I had been forgiven, yet not by Mr. *Milton*, for I knew he had not forgiven me. Then, it must be, I was forgiven by *God*; and why? I had done Nothing to get His forgiveness, only presumed on His Mercy to ask manie Things I had noe  
Right

Sunday evening.

1644.

Right to expect. And yet I felt I *was* forgiven. Why then mighte not Mr. *Milton* some Day forgive me? Should the Debt of ten thousand Talents be cancelled, and not the Debt of a hundred Pence? Then I thought on that same Word, Talents; and considered, had I ten or even one? Decided to consider it at leisure, more closelie, and to make over to *God* henceforthe, be they ten, or be it one. Then dressed with much Composure, and went down to Breakfast.

Having marked that Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* affected not Companie on this Day, spent it chieflie by myself, except at Church and Meal-times; partlie in my Chamber, partlie in the Garden Bowre by the Bee-hives. Made manie Resolutions, which, in Church, I converted into Prayers and Promises. Hence, my holy Peace.

Monday.

*Rose* proposed, this Morning, we shoulde resume our Studdies. Felt loathe

loathe to comply, but did soe neverthelesse, and afterwards we walked manie Miles, to visit some poor Folk. This Evening, Mr. *Agnew* read us the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. How lifelike are the Portraitures! I mind me that Mr. *Milton* shewed me the *Talbot* Inn, that Day we crost the River with Mr. *Marvel*.

1644.

How heartilie do I wish I had never read that same Letter!—or rather, that it had never been written. Thus it is, even with our Wishes. We think ourselves reasonable in wishing some small Thing were otherwise, which it were quite as impossible to alter as some great Thing. Neverthelesse I cannot help fretting over the Remembrance of the Part wherein he spake such bitter Things of my “most ungoverned Passion “for Revellings and Junketings.” Sure, he would not call my Life too merrie now, could he see me lying wakefulle on  
my

Tuesday.

1644.

my Bed, could he see me preventing the Morning Watch, could he see me at my Prayers, at my Books, at my Needle. . . . He shall find he hath judged too hardlie of poor *Moll*, even yet.

Wednesday.

Took a cold Dinner in a Basket with us to-day, and ate our rusticall Repast on the Skirt of a Wood, where we could see the Squirrels at their Gambols. Mr. *Agnew* lay on the Grasse, and *Rose* took out her Knitting, whereat he laught, and sayd she was like the *Dutch* Women, that must knit, whether mourning or feasting, and even on the Sabbath. Having laught her out of her Work, he drew out Mr. *George Herbert's* Poems, and read us a Strayn which pleased *Rose* and me soe much, that I shall copy it herein, to have always by me.

*How fresh, oh Lord; how sweet and clean  
Are thy Returns! e'en as the Flowers  
in Spring, To*



To which, beside their owne Demesne,  
The late pent Frosts Tributes of Plea-  
sure bring.

1614.

Grief melts away like Snow in May,  
As if there was noe such cold Thing.

Who would have thought my shrivelled  
Heart

Woulde have recovered Greenness? it  
was gone

Quite underground, as Flowers depart  
To see their Mother-root, when they  
have blown,

Where they together, all the hard  
Weather,

Dead to the World, keep House alone.

These are thy Wonders, Lord of Power!  
Killing and quickening, bringing down  
to Hell

And up to Heaven, in an Hour,  
Making a Chiming of a passing Bell.

We say amiss "this or that is;"  
Thy Word is alle, if we could spell.

Oh

1644.

*Oh that I once past changing were !  
 Fast in thy Paradise, where no Flowers  
 can wither ;  
 Manie a Spring I shoot up faire,  
 Offering at Heaven, growing and  
 groaning thither,  
 Nor doth my Flower want a Spring  
 Shower,  
 My Sins<sup>s</sup> and I joyning together.*

*But while I grow in a Straight Line,  
 Still upwards bent, as if Heaven were  
 my own,  
 Thy Anger comes, and I decline.—  
 What Frost to that? What Pole is  
 not the Zone  
 Where alle Things burn, when thou dost  
 turn,  
 And the least Frown of thine is shewn ?*

*And now, in Age, I bud agayn,  
 I once more smell the Dew and Rain,  
 And relish Versing ! Oh my onlie Light!  
 After soe manie Deaths, I bud and write,  
 It*

*It cannot be that I am he  
On whom thy Tempests fell alle Night?*

1644.

*These are thy Wonders, Lord of Love,  
To make us see we are but Flowers that  
glide,*

*Which, when we once can feel and  
prove,*

*Thou hast a Garden for us where to  
bide.*

*Who would be more, swelling their  
Store,*

*Forfeit their Paradise by their Pride.*

Father sent over *Diggory* with a Letter for me from deare *Robin*: alsoe, to ask when I was minded to return Home, as *Mother* wants to goe to *Sandford*. Fixed the week after next; but *Rose* says I must be here agayn at the Apple-gathering. Answered *Robin's* Letter. He looketh not for Choyce of fine Words; nor noteth an Error here and there in the Spelling.

Thursday.

Life

1644.  
Tuesday.

Life flows away here in such unmarked Tranquilitie, that one hath Nothing whereof to write, or to remember what distinguished one day from another. I am sad, yet not dulle; methinks I have grown some Yeares older since I came here. I can fancy elder Women feeling much as I doe now. I have Nothing to desire, Nothing to hope, that is likelie to come to pass—Nothing to regret, except I begin soe far back, that my whole Life hath neede, as 'twere, to begin over agayn. . . .

Mr. *Agnew* translates to us Portions of *Thuanus* his Historie, and the Letters of *Theodore Beza*, concerning the *French Reformed Church*; oft prolix, yet interesting, especially with Mr. *Agnew's* Comments, and Allusions to our own Time. On the other Hand, *Rose* reads *Davila*, the sworne Apologiste of *Catherine de' Medicis*, whose charming *Italian* even I can comprehend; but alle is false and plausible. How sad, that  
the

the wrong Partie shoulde be victorious! Soe it may befall in this Land; though, indeede, I have hearde soe much bitter Rayling on bothe Sides, that I know not which is right. The Line of Demarcation is not soe distinctly drawn, methinks, as 'twas in *France*. Yet it cannot be right to take up Arms against constituted Authorities?—Yet, and if those same Authorities abuse their Trust? Nay, Women cannot understand these Matters, and I thank Heaven they need not. Onlie, they cannot help siding with those they love; and sometimes those they love are on opposite Sides.

Mr. *Agnew* sayth, the secular Arm shoulde never be employed in spirituall Matters, and that the *Huguenots* committed a grave Mistake in choosing Princes and Admirals for their Leaders, insteade of simple Preachers with Bibles in their Hands; and he askt, “did *Luther* or *Peter* the Hermit most manife-  
“festlie

1644.

“festlie labour with the Blessing of  
“*God?*”

. . . . I have noted the Heads of  
Mr. *Agnew's* Readings, after a Fashion  
of *Rose's*, in order to have a shorte, com-  
prehensive Account of the Whole; and  
this hath abridged my journalling. It  
is the more profitable to me of the two,  
changes the sad Current of my Thought,  
and, though an unaccustomed Task, I  
like it well.

Saturday.

On *Monday*, I return to *Forest Hill*.  
I am well pleased to have yet another  
*Sheepscote* Sabbath. To-day we had  
the rare Event of a Dinner-guest; soe  
full of what the Rebels are doing, and  
alle the Horrors of Strife, that he seemed  
to us quiete Folks, like the Denizen of  
another world.

Aug. 3.

*Forest Hill, August 3.*

Home agayn, and *Mother* hath gone  
on her long intended Visitt to Uncle  
*John*, taking with her the two youngest.  
*Father*

*Father* much preoccupide, by reason of the Supplies needed for his Majesty's Service; soe that, sweet *Robin* being away, I find myselfe lonely. *Harry* rides with me in the Evening, but the Mornings I have alle to myself; and when I have fulfilled *Mother's* Behests in the Kitchen and Still-room, I have nought but to read in our somewhat scant Collection of Books, the moste Part whereof are religious. And (not on that Account, but by reason I have read the most of them before) methinks I will write to borrow some of *Rose*; for Change of Reading hath now become a Want. I am minded, also, to seek out, and minister to some poore Folk after her Fashion. Now that I am Queen of the Larder, there is many a wholesome Scrap at my Disposal, and there are likewise sundrie Physiques in my Mother's Closet, which she addeth to Year by Year, and never wants, we are soe seldom ill.

1644.

Deare

1644.  
Aug. 5.

Deare *Father* sayd this Evening, as we came in from a Walk on the Terrace, “My sweet *Moll*, you were ever the “Light of the House; but now, though “you are more staid than of former “Time, I find you a better Com- “panion than ever. This last Visitt “to *Sheepscote* hath evened your “Spiritts.”

Poor *Father*! he knew not how I lay awake and wept last Night, for one I shall never see agayn, nor how the Terrace Walk minded me of him. My Spiritts may seem even, and I exert myself to please; but, within, all is dark Shade, or at best, grey Twilight; and my Spiritts are, in Fact, worse here than they were at *Sheepscote*, because, here, I am continuallie thinking of one whose Name is never uttered; whereas, there, it was mentioned naturallie and tenderlie, though sadlie. . . . .

I will forthe to see some of the poore Folk.

Resolved



Resolved to make the Circuit of the Cottages, but onlie reached the first, wherein I found poor *Nell* in such Grief of Body and Mind, that I was avised to wait with her a long Time. Askt why she had not sent to us for Relief; was answered she had thought of doing soe, but was feared of making too free. After a lengthened Visitt, which seemed to relieve her Mind, and certaynlie relieved mine, I bade her Farewell, and at the Wicket met my Father coming up with a playn-favoured but scholarlike lookingreverend Man. He sayd, "*Moll*, "I could not think what had become of "you." I answered, I hoped I had not kept him waiting for Dinner—poor *Nell* had entertayned me longer than I wisht, with the Catalogue of her Troubles. The Stranger looking attentively at me, observed that maybe the poor Woman had entertayned an Angel unawares; and added, "Doubt not, Madam, we "woulde rather await our Dinner than  
"that

1644.  
Same  
night.

1644.

“that you should have curtayled your  
“Message of Charity.” Hithertoe, my  
Father had not named this Gentleman  
to me ; but now he sayd, “Child, this is  
“the Reverend Doctor *Jeremy Taylor*,  
“Chaplain in Ordinarie to his Majesty,  
“and whome you know I have heard  
“more than once preach before the King  
“since he abode in *Oxford*.” Thereon  
I made a lowly Reverence, and we  
walked homewards together. At first  
he discoursed chiefly with my Father  
on the Troubles of the Times, and then  
he drew me into the Dialogue, in the  
Course of which I let fall a Saying of  
Mr. *Agnew’s*, which drew from the  
reverend Gentleman a respectfule Look  
I felt I no Way deserved. Soe then I  
had to explain that the Saying was none  
of mine, and felt ashamed he shoulde  
suppose me wiser than I was, especiallie  
as he commended my Modesty. But  
we progressed well, and he soon had  
the Discourse all to himself, for Squire  
*Paice*

*Paice* came up, and detained *Father*, while the Doctor and I walked on. I could not help reflecting how odd it was, that I, whom Nature had endowed with such a very ordinariè Capacitie, and scarce anie Taste for Letters, shoulde continuallie be thrown into the Companie of the cleverest of Men,—first Mr. *Milton*; then Mr. *Agnew*; and now, this Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*. But, like the other two, he is not merely clever, he is Christian and good. How much I learnt in this short Interview! for short it seemed, though it must have extended over a good Half-hour. He said, “Perhaps, young Lady, the Time  
“ may come when you shall find safer  
“ Solace in the Exercise of the Charities  
“ than of the Affections. Safer: for,  
“ not to consider how a successulle or  
“ unsuccessulle Passion for a human  
“ Being of like Infirmities with ourselves,  
“ oft stains and darkens and shortens  
“ the Current of Life, even the chastened  
“ Love

1644.

“ Love of a Mother for her Child, as of  
“ *Octavia*, who swooned at ‘ *Tu, Marcellus, eris,*’—or of Wives for their Hus-  
“ bands, as *Artemisia* and *Laodamia*,  
“ sometimes amounting to Idolatry—  
“ nay, the Love of Friend for Friend,  
“ with alle its sweet Influences and  
“ animating transports, yet exceeding  
“ the Reasonableness of that of *David*  
“ for *Jonathan*, or of our Blessed Lord  
“ for *St. John* and the Family of *Laza-*  
“ *rus*, may procure far more Torment  
“ than Profit: even if the Attachment  
“ be reciprocal, and well grounded, and  
“ equallie matcht, which often it is not.  
“ Then interpose human Tempers, and  
“ Chills, and Heates, and Slyghts fancied  
“ or intended, which makes the vext  
“ Soul readie to wish it had never  
“ existed. How small a Thing is a  
“ human Heart! you might grasp it in  
“ your little Hand; and yet its Strifes and  
“ Agonies are enough to distend a Skin  
“ that should cover the whole World!  
“ But,

1644.

“But, in the Charities, what Peace! yea,  
“they distill Sweetnesse even from the  
“Unthankfulle, blessing him that gives  
“more than him that receives; while in  
“the Main, they are laid out at better  
“Interest than our warmest Affections,  
“and bring in a far richer Harvest of  
“Love and Gratitude. Yet, let our  
“Affections have their fitting Exercise  
“too, staying ourselves with the Reflec-  
“tion, that there is greater Happinesse,  
“after alle Things sayd, in loving than  
“in being loved, save by the *God* of  
“Love who first loved us, and that they  
“dwell in Love who dwell in *Him*.”

Then he went on to speak of the manifold Acts and Divisions of Charity, as much, methought, in the vein of a Poet as a Preacher; and he minded me much of that scene in the tenth Book of the *Fairie Queene*, so lately read to us by Mr. *Agnew*, wherein the *Red Cross Knight* and *Una* were shown *Mercy* at her Work.

1644.  
Aug. 10.

A Pack-horse from *Sheepscote*, just reported, laden with a goodlie Store of Books, besides sundrie smaller Tokens of *Rose's* thoughtfulle Kindnesse. I have now methodicallie divided my Time into stated Hours, of Prayer, Exercise, Studdy, Housewiferie, and Acts of Mercy, on however humble a Scale; and find mine owne peace of Mind thereby increased, notwithstanding the Darknesse of public and Dullnesse of private Affairs.

Made out the Meaning of "Cynosure" and "Cimmerian Darknesse." . . . .

Aug. 15.

Full sad am I to learn that Mr. *Milton* hath published another Book in Advocacy of Divorce. Alas, why will he chafe against the Chain, and widen the cruel Division between us? My Father is outrageous on the Matter, and speaks so passionatelie of him, that it is worse than not speaking of him at alle, which latelie I was avised to complain of.

*Dick*

*Dick* beginneth to fancie himself in Love with *Audrey Paice*—an Attachment that will doe him noe Good: his Tastes alreadie want raising, and she will onlie lower them, I feare,—a comely, romping, noisie Girl, that, were she but a Farmer's Daughter, woulde be the Life and Soul of alle the Whitsun-ales, Harvest-Homes, and Hay-makings in the Country: in short, as fond of idling and merrymaking as I once was myself: onlie I never was soe riotous.

I beginne to see Faults in *Dick* and *Harry* I never saw before. Is my Taste bettering, or my Temper worsening? At alle Events, we have noe cross Words, for I expect them not to alter, knowing how hard it is to doe soe by myself.

I look forward with Pleasure to my *Sheepscote* Visitt. Deare *Mother* returneth to-morrow. Good Dr. *Taylor* hath twice taken the trouble to walk over from *Oxford* to see me, but he  
hath

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hath now left, and we may never meet agayn. His Visitts have beene very precious to me : I think he hath some Glimmering of my sad Case : indeed, who knows it not ? At parting he sayd, smiling, he hoped he should yet hear of my making Offerings to *Viriplaca* on *Mount Palatine* ; then added, gravelie, “ You know, where reall Offerings may “ be made and alwaies accepted—Offer- “ ings of spare Half-hours and Five- “ minutes, when we shut the Closet “ Door and commune with our own “ Hearts and are still.” Alsoe he sayd, “ There are Sacrifices to make which “ sometimes wring our very Hearts to “ offer ; but our gracious *God* accepts “ them neverthelesse, if our Feet be “ really in the right Path, even though, “ like *Chryseis*, we look back, weeping.”

He sayd . . . . But how manie Things as beautifulle and true did I hear my Husband say, which passed by me like the idle Wind that I regarded not !

*Harry*



*Harry* hath just broughte in the News of his Majestie's Success in the West. Lord *Essex's* Army hath beene completely surrounded by the royal Troops; himself forct to escape in a Boat to *Plymouth*, and all the Arms, Artillerie, Baggage, &c., of *Skippon's* Men have fallen into the Hands of the King. *Father* is soe pleased that he hath mounted the Flag, and given double Allowance of Ale to his Men.

I wearie to hear from *Robin*.

*Sheepscote*, Oct. 10.

How sweete a Picture of rurall Life did *Sheepscote* present, when I arrived here this Afternoon! The Water being now much out, the Face of the Countrie presented a new Aspect: there were Men threshing the Walnut Trees, Children and Women putting the Nuts into Osier Baskets, a Bailiff on a white Horse overlooking them, and now and then galloping to another Party, and splashing through  
the

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the Water. Then we found Mr. *Agnew* equallie busie with his Apples, mounted half Way up one of the Trées, and throwing Cherry Pippins down into *Rose's* Apron, and now and then making as though he would pelt her : onlie she dared him, and would not be frightened. Her Donkey, chewing Apples in the Corner, with the Cider running out of his Mouth, presented a ludicrous Image of Enjoyment, and 'twas evidently enhanct by *Giles'* brushing his rough Coat with a Birch Besom, instead of minding his owne Businesse of sweeping the Walk. The Sun, shining with mellow Light on the mown Grass and fresh clipt Hornbeam Hedges, made even the commonest Objects distinct and cheerfulle ; and the Air was soe cleare, we could hear the Village Children afar off at their Play.

*Rose* had abundance of delicious new Honey in the Comb, and Bread hot from the Oven, for our earlie Supper. *Dick*  
was

was tempted to stay too late ; however, he is oft as late, now, returning from *Audrey Paice*, though my Mother likes it not.

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*Rose* is quite in good Spiritts again, and we goe on most harmoniously and happilie. Alle our Tastes are now in common ; and I never more enjoyed this Union of Seclusion and Society. Besides, Mr. *Agnew* is more than commonlie kind, and never speaks sternlie or sharplie to me now. Indeed, this Morning, looking thoughtfullie at me, he sayd, "I know not, *Cousin*, what Change "has come over you, but you are now "alle that a wise Man coulde love and "approve." I sayd, it must be owing then to Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*, who had done me more goode, it woulde seeme, in three Lessons, than he or Mr. *Milton* coulde imparte in thirty or three hundred. He sayd he was inclined to attribute it to a higher Source than that ;  
and

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and yet, there was doubtlesse a great Knack in teaching, and there was a good deal in liking the Teacher. He had alwaies hearde the Doctor spoken of as a good, pious, and clever Man, though too high a Prelatist. I sayd, "There were good Men of alle Sorts: there was Mr. *Milton*, who woulde pull the Church down; there was Mr. *Agnew*, who woulde onlie have it mended; and there was Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*, who was content with it as it stooode." Then Rose askt me of the puritanicall Preachers. Then I showed her how they preached, and made her laugh. But Mr. *Agnew* woulde not laugh. But I made him laugh at last. Then he was angrie with himself and with me; only not very angry; and sayd I had a Right to a Name which he wist had beene given me, of "cleaving Mischiefe." I knew not he knew of it, and was checked, though I laught it off.

Walking

Walking together, this morning, *Rose* was avised to say, "Did Mr. *Milton* ever tell you the Adventure of the *Italian Lady*?" "Rely on it he never did," sayd Mr. *Agnew*.—" *Milton* is as modest a Man as ever breathed—alle Men of first-class Genius are soe." "What was the Adventure?" I askt, curiouslie. "Why, I neede not tell you, *Moll*, that *John Milton*, as a Youth, was extremelie handsome, even beautiful. His Colour came and went soe like a Girl's, that we of *Christ's College* used to call him 'the Lady,' and thereby annoy him noe little. One summer Afternoone he and I and young *King* (*Lycidas*, you know) had started on a country Walk (the Countrie is not pretty, round *Cambridge*), when we fell in with an Acquaintance whom Mr. *Milton* affected not, so he sayd he would walk on to the first rising Ground and wait us there. On this rising Ground stood a Tree, beneath  
" which

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“ which our impatient young Gentleman  
“ presentlie cast himself, and, having  
“ walked fast, and the Weather being  
“ warm, soon falls asleep as sound as a  
“ Top. Meantime, *King* and I quit our  
“ Friend and saunter forward pretty  
“ easilie. Anon comes up with us a  
“ Caroché, with something I know not  
“ what of outlandish in its Build; and  
“ within it, two Ladies, one of them  
“ having the Fayrest Face I ever set  
“ Eyes on, present Companie duly ex-  
“ cepted. The Caroché having passed  
“ us, *King* and I mutuallie express our  
“ Admiration, and thereupon, preferring  
“ Turf to Dust, got on the other Side of  
“ the Hedge, which was not soe thick  
“ but that we could make out the Ca-  
“ roché, and see the Ladies descend  
“ from it, to walk up the Hill. Having  
“ reached the Tree, they paused in Sur-  
“ prise at seeing *Milton* asleep beneath  
“ it; and in prettie dumb Shew, which  
“ we watcht sharplie, exprest their Ad-  
“ miration

“miration of his Appearance and Pos-  
 “ture, which would have suited an  
 “*Arcadian* well enough. The younger  
 “Lady, hastilie taking out a Pencil and  
 “Paper, wrote something which she  
 “laughinglie shewed her Companion,  
 “and then put into the Sleeper’s Hand.  
 “Thereupon they got into their Caroché,  
 “and drove off. *King* and I, dying  
 “with Curiositie to know what she had  
 “writ, soon roused our Friend and  
 “possest ourselves of the Secret. The  
 “Verses ran thus :—

*Occhi, Stelle mortali;*  
*Ministre de miei Mali,*  
*Se, chiusi, m’uccidete,*  
*Aperti, che farete ?*

“*Milton* coloured, crumpled them up,  
 “and yet put them in his Pocket; then  
 “askt us what the Lady was like. And  
 “herein lay the Pleasantry of the Affair;  
 “for I truly told him she had a Pear-  
 “shaped Face, lustrous black Eyes, and  
 “a Skin that shewed ‘*il bruno il bel non*  
 “‘*toglie;*’

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“*toglie* ;’ whereas, *King*, in his Mischief,  
 “ drew a fancy Portrait, much liker you,  
 “ *Moll*, than the Incognita, which hit  
 “ *Milton’s* Taste soe much better, that he  
 “ was believed for his Payns ; and then  
 “ he declared that I had beene describing  
 “ the Duenna !. . . Some Time after,  
 “ when *Milton* beganne to talk of visit-  
 “ ing *Italy*, we bantered him, and sayd  
 “ he was going to look for the Incognita.  
 “ He stooede it well, and sayd, ‘ Laugh  
 “ ‘ on ! do you think I mind you ? Not  
 “ ‘ a Bit.’ I think he did.”

Just at this Turn, Mr. *Agnew* stum-  
 bled at something in the long Grass.  
 It proved to be an old, rustie Horse-  
 pistol. His Countenance changed at  
 once from gay to grave. “ I thought  
 “ we had noe such Things hereabouts  
 “ yet,” cried he, viewing it askance.—  
 “ I suppose I mighte as well think I had  
 “ found a Corner of the Land where  
 “ there was noe originall Sin.” And  
 soe flung it over the Hedge.

— First



—First-class Geniuses are alwaies modest, are they?—Then I should say that young *Italian Lady's* Genius was not of the first Class.

1644.

Speaking, to-day, of Mr. *Waller*, whom I had once seen at Uncle *John's*, Mr. *Agnew* sayd he had obtayned the Reputation of being one of our smoothest Versers, and thereupon brought forth one or two of his small Pieces in Manuscript, which he read to *Rose* and me. They were addressd to the Lady *Dorothy Sidney*; and certainlie for specious Flatterie I doe not suppose they can be matcht; but there is noe Impress of reall Feeling in them. How diverse from my Husband's Versing! He never writ any mere Love-verses, indeede, soe far as I know; but how much truer a Sense he hath of what is reallie beautifulle and becoming in a Woman than Mr. *Waller*! The Lady *Alice Egerton* mighte have beene more justlie proud  
of

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of the fine Things written *for* her in *Comus*, than the Lady *Dorothea* of anie of the fine Things written *of* her by this courtier-like Poet. For, to say that Trees bend down in homage to a Woman, when she walks under them, and that the healing Waters of *Tonbridge* were placed there by Nature to compensate for the fatal Pride of *Sacharissa*, is soe fullesome and untrue as noe Woman, not devoured by Conceite, coulde endure; whereas, the Check that Villanie is sensible of in the Presence of Virtue, is most nobly, not extravagantlie, exprest by *Comus*. And though my Husband be almost too lavish, even in his short Pieces, of classic Allusion and Personation, yet, like antique Statues and Busts well placed in some statelie Pleasaunce, they are alwaies appropriate and gracefulle, which is more than can be sayd of Mr. *Waller's* overstrayned Figures and Metaphors.

Oct. 20.

News from Home: alle well. *Audrey Paice*

*Paice* on a Visitt there. I hope *Mother* hath not put her into my Chamber, but I know that she hath sett soe manie Trays full of Spearmint, Peppermint, Camomiles, and Poppie-heads in the blue Chamber to dry, that she will not care to move them, nor have the Window opened lest they should be blown aboute. I wish I had turned the Key on my ebony Cabinet.

1644.

*Richard* and *Audrey* rode over here, and spent a noisie Afternoone. *Rose* had the Goose dressed which I know she meant to have reserved for to-morrow. *Clover* was in a Heat, which one would have thoughte he needed not to have beene, with carrying a Lady; but *Audrey* is heavie. She treats *Dick* like a Boy; and, indeede he is not much more; but he is quite taken up with her. I find she lies in the blue Chamber, which she says smells rarelie of Herbs. They returned not  
till

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till late, after sundrie Hints from Mr. *Agnew*.

Oct. 27.

Alas, alas, *Robin's* Silence is too Sorrowfullie explained! He hath beene sent Home soe ill that he is like to die. This Report I have from *Diggory*, just come over to fetch me, with whom I start, soe soone as his Horse is bated. *Lord*, have Mercie on *Robin*!

The Children are alle sent away to keep the House quiete.

*At Robin's Bedside.*

Saturday  
Night.

Oh, woefulle Sight! I had not known that pale Face, had I met it unawares. So thin and wan,—and he hath shot up into a tall Stripling during the last few Months. These two Nights of Watching have tried me sorelie, but I would not be withholden from sitting up with him yet agayn—what and if this Night should be his last? how could I forgive myself for sleeping on now and taking  
my

my Rest? The first Night, he knew me not; yet it was bitter-sweet to hear him chiding at sweet *Moll* for not coming. Yesternight he knew me for a While, kissed me, and fell into an heavie Sleepe, with his Hand locked in mine. We hoped the Crisis was come; but 'twas not soe. He raved much of a Man alle in Red, riding hard after him. I minded me of those Words, "The Enemy sayd, I will pursue, I will also overtake,"—and, noe one being by, save the unconscious Sufferer, I kneeled down beside him, and most earnestlie prayed for his Deliverance from all spirituall Adversaries. When I lookt up, his Eyes, larger and darker than ever, were fixt on me with a strange, wistfulle Stare, but he spake not. From that Moment he was quiete.

The Doctor thought him rambling this Morning, though I knew he was not, when he spake of an Angel in a long white Garment watching over him and kneeling by him in the Night.

Poor

1644.  
Sunday  
Evening.

Poor *Nell* sitteth up with *Mother* to-night—right thankfulle is she to find that she can be of anie Use: she says it seems soe strange that she should be able to make any Return for my Kindnesse. I must sleep to-night, that I may watch to-morrow. The Servants are nigh spent, and are besides foolishlie afraid of Infection. I hope *Rose* prays for me. Soe drowsie and dulle am I, as scarce to be able to pray for myself.

Monday.

*Rose* and Mr. *Agnew* come to abide with us for some Days. How thankfulle am I! Tears have relieved me.

*Robin* worse to-day. *Father* quite subdued. Mr. *Agnew* will sit up to-night, and insists on my sleeping.

*Crab* howled under my Window yesternight as he did before my Wedding. I hope there is Nothing in it. *Harry* got up and beat him, and at last put him in the Stable.

After

After two Nights' Rest, I feel quite strengthened and restored this Morning. Deare *Rose* read me to sleep in her low, gentle Voice, and then lay down by my Side, twice stepping into *Robin's* Chamber during the Night, and bringing me News that all was well. Relieved in Mind, I slept heavilie nor woke till late. Then, returned to the sick Chamber, and found *Rose* bathing dear *Robin's* Temples with Vinegar, and changing his Pillow—his thin Hand rested on Mr. *Agnew*, on whom he lookt with a composed, collected Gaze. Slowlie he turned his Eyes on me, and faintlie smiled, but spake not.

Poor dear *Mother* is ailing now. I sate with her and *Father* some Time; but it was a true Relief when *Rose* took my Place and let me return to the sick Room. *Rose* hath alreadie made several little Changes for the better; improved the Ventilation of *Robin's* Chamber, and prevented his hearing soe manie Noises.

Alsoe,

1644.

Tuesday.

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Alsoe, showed me how to make a pleasant cooling Drink, which he likes better than the warm Liquids, and which she assures me he may take with perfect Safetie.

Same  
Evening.

*Robin* vext, even to Tears, because the Doctor forbids the Use of his cooling Drink, though it hath certainlie abated the Fever. At his Wish I stept down to intercede with the Doctor, then closetted with my Father, to discourse, as I supposed, of *Robin's* Symptoms. Insteade of which, found them earnestlie engaged on the never-ending Topick of Cavaliers and Roundheads. I was chafed and cut to the Heart, yet what can poor *Father* do? he is uselesse in the Sick-room, he is wearie of Suspense, and 'tis well if publick Affairs can divert him for an odd Half-hour.

The Doctor would not hear of *Robin* taking the cooling Beverage, and warned me that his Death would be upon my Head if I permitted him to be chilled :

soe



soe what could I doe? Poor *Robin* very impatient in consequence; and raving towards midnight. *Rose* insisted on taking the last Half of my Watch.

1644.

I know not that I was ever more sorelie exercised than during the first Half of this Night. *Robin*, in his crazie Fit, would leave his Bed, and was soe strong as nearlie to master *Nell* and me, and I feared I must have called *Richard*. The next Minute he fell back as weak as a Child: we covered him up warm, and he was overtaken either with Stupor or Sleep. Earnestlie did I pray it might be the latter, and conduce to his healing. Afterwards, there being writing Implements at Hand, I wrote a Letter to Mr. *Milton*, which, though the Fancy of sending it soon died away, yet eased my Mind. When not in Prayer, I often find myself silently talking to him.

Waking late after my scant Night's Rest, I found my Breakfast neatlie layd out

Wednesday.

1644.

out in the little Antechamber, to prevent the Fatigue of going down Stairs. A Handfull of Autumn Flowers beside my Plate, left me in noe Doubt it was *Rose's* doing ; and Mr. *Agnew* writing at the Window, told me he had persuaded my Father to goe to *Shotover* with *Dick*. Then laying aside his Pen, stept into the Sick-chamber for the latest News, which was good : and, sitting next me, talked of the Progress of *Robin's* Illnesse in a grave yet hopefull Manner ; leading, as he chieflie does, to high and unearthlie Sources of Consolation. He advised me to take a Turn in the fresh Ayr, though but as far as the two Junipers, before I entered *Robin's* Chamber, which, somewhat reluctantlie, I did ; but the bright Daylight and warm Sun had no good Effect on my Spiritts : on the Contrarie, nothing in blythe Nature seeming in unison with my Sadnesse, Tears flowed without relieving me.

——What a solemne, pompous Prigge  
is

is this Doctor! He cries "humph!" and "aye!" and bites his Nails and screws his Lips together, but I don't believe he understands soe much of Physick, after alle, as Mr. *Agnew*.

1644.

*Father* came home fulle of the Rebels' Doings, but as for me, I shoulde heare them thundering at our Gate with Apathie, except insofar as I feared their disturbing *Robin*.

*Audrey* rode over with her Father, this Morn, to make Enquiries. She might have come sooner had she meant to be anie reall Use to a Family she has thought of entering. Had *Rose* come to our Help as late in the Day, we had been poorlie off.

May *Heaven* in its Mercy save us from the evil Consequence of this new Mischance!—*Richard*, jealous at being allowed so little Share in nursing *Robin*, whom he sayd he loved as well as anie did, would sit up with him last Night,  
along

Thursday.

1644.

along with *Mother*. Twice I heard him snoring, and stept in to prevail on him to change Places, but could not get him to stir. A third Time he fell asleep, and, it seems, *Mother* slept too; and *Robin*, in his Fever, got out of Bed and drank near a Quart of colde Water, waking *Dick* by setting down the Pitcher. Of course the Bustle soon reached my listening Ears. *Dick*, to do him Justice, was frightened enoughe, and stole away to his Bed without a Word of Defence; but poor *Mother*, who had been equallie off her Watch, made more Noise about it than was good for *Robin*; who, neverthelesse, we having warmlie covered him up, burst into a profuse Heat, and fell into a sound Sleep, which hath now holden him manie Hours. Mr. *Agnew* augureth favourable of his waking, but we await it in prayerfull Anxietie.

— The Crisis is past! and the Doctor sayeth he alle along expected  
it

it last Night, which I cannot believe, but *Father* and *Mother* doe. At alle Events, praised be *Heaven*, there is now hope that deare *Robin* may recover. *Rose* and I have mingled Tears, Smiles, and Thanksgivings; Mr. *Agnew* hath expressed Gratitude after a more collected Manner, and endeavoured to check the somewhat ill-governed Expression of Joy throughout the House; warning the Servants, but especiallie *Dick* and *Harry*, that *Robin* may yet have a Relapse.

1644.

With what Transport have I sat beside dear *Robin's* Bed, returning his fixed, earnest, thankfule Gaze, and answering the feeble Pressure of his Hand!—Going into the Studdy just now, I found *Father* crying like a Child—the first Time I have known him give Way to Tears during *Robin's* Illnesse. Mr. *Agnew* presentlie came in, and composed him better than I could.

*Robin* better, though still very weak.  
Had

Saturday.

1644.

Had his Bed made, and took a few Spoonfuls of Broth.

Sunday.

A very different Sabbath from the last. Though *Robin's* Constitution hath received a Shock it may never recover, his comparative Amendment fills us with Thankfullnesse; and our chastened Suspense hath a sweet Solemnitie and Trustfulnesse in it, which pass understanding.

Mr. *Agnew* conducted our Devotions. This Morning, I found him praying with *Robin*—I question if it were for the First Time. *Robin* looking on him with Eyes of such sedate Affection !

Thursday.

*Robin* still progressing. Dear *Rose* and Mr. *Agnew* leave us to-morrow, but they will soon come agayn. Oh faithful Friends !

\* \* \* \* \*

1646.

April.

Can Anie thing equall the desperate Ingratitude of the human Heart ? Testi-  
tife

tife of it, Journall, agaynst me. Here did I, throughout the Incessant Cares and Anxieties of *Robin's* Sicknesse, find, or make Time, for amost daily Record of my Trouble; since which, whole months have passed without so much as a scrawled Ejaculation of Thankfulness that the sick hath beene made whole.

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Yet, not that that Thankfullnesse hath beene unfelt, nor, though unwritten, unexpressed. Nay, O *Lord*, deeplie, deeplie have I thanked Thee for Thy tender Mercies. And he healed soe slowlie, that Suspense, as 'twere, wore itself out, and gave Place to a dull, mournful Persuasion that an *Hydropsia* would waste him away, though more slowlie, yet noe less surelie than the Fever.

Soe Weeks lengthened into Months, I mighte well say Years, they seemed soe long! and stille he seemed to neede more Care and Tendernesse; till, just as  
he

1646.

he and I had learnt to say, "Thy Will, "O *Lord*, be done," he began to gain Flesh, his craving Appetite moderated, yet his Food nourished him, and by *God's* Blessing he recovered!

, During that heavie Season of Probation, our Hearts were unlocked, and we spake oft to one another of Things in Heaven and Things in Earth. Afterwards, our mutuall Reserves returned, and *Robin*, methinks, became shyer than before, but there can never cease to be a dearer Bond between us. Now we are apart, I aim to keep him mindfulle of the high and holie Resolutions he formed in his Sicknesse; and though he never answers these Portions of my Letters, I am avised to think he finds them not displeasing.

Now that *Oxford* is like to be besieged, my Life is more confined than ever; yet I cannot, and will not leave *Father* and *Mother*, even for the *Agnews*, while they are soe much harassed. This Morning,  
my



my Father hath received a Letter from Sir *Thomas Glemham*, requiring a larger Quantitie of winnowed Wheat, than, with alle his Loyaltie, he likes to send.

1646.

*Ralph Hewlett* hath just looked in to say, his Father and Mother have in Safetie reached *London*, where he will shortlie joyn them, and to ask, is there anie Service he can doe me? Ay, truly; one that I dare not name—he can bring me Word of Mr. *Milton*, of his Health, of his Looks, of his Speech, and whether . . . . .

April 23.

*Ralph* shall be noe Messenger of Mine.

Talking of Money Matters this Morning, *Mother* sayd Something that brought Tears into mine Eyes. She observed that though my Husband had never beene a Favourite of hers, there was one Thing wherein she must say he had behaved generously; he had never, to this Day, askt *Father* for the 500*l.* which had  
brought

April 24.

1646.

brought him, in the first Instance, to *Forest Hill*, (he having promised old Mr. *Milton* to try to get the Debt paid,) and the which, on his asking for my Hand, *Father* tolde him shoulde be made over sooner or later, in lieu of Dower.

Did *Rose* know the Bitter-sweet she was imparting to me, when she gave me, by Stealth as 'twere, the latelie publisht Volume of my Husband's *English Versing*? It hath beene my Companion ever since; for I had perused the *Comus* but by Snatches, under the Disadvantage of crabbed Manuscript. This Morning, to use his owne deare Words:—

*I sat me down to watch, upon a Bank,  
With Ivy canopied, and interwove  
With flaunting Honeysuckle, and 'be-  
ganne,  
Wrapt in a pleasing Fit of Melancholie,  
To meditate.*

The Text of my Meditation was this, drawne from the same loved Source:—

*This*

*This I hold firm ;  
 Virtue may be assayed, but never hurt,  
 Surprised by unjust Force, but not en-  
 thrall'd ;  
 Yea, even that which Mischief meant  
 most Harm,  
 Shall, in the happy Trial, prove most  
 Glory.*

1646.

But who hath such Virtue ? have I ?  
 hath he ? No, we have both gone astray,  
 and done amiss, and wrought sinfullie ;  
 but I worst, I first, therefore more neede  
 that I humble myself, and pray for both.

There is one, more unhappie, perhaps,  
 than either. The *King*, most misfor-  
 tunate Gentleman ! who knoweth not  
 which Way to turn, nor whom to trust.  
 Last Time I saw him, methought never  
 was there a Face soe full of Woe.

The *King* hath escaped ! He gave  
 Orders overnight at alle the Gates, for  
 three Persons to passe ; and, accom-  
 panied

May 6.

1646.

panied onlie by Mr. *Ashburnham* and Mr. *Hurd*, rode forthe at Nightfalle, towards *London*. Sure, he will not throw himselfe into the Hands of Parliament?

*Mother* is affrighted beyond Measure at the near Neighbourhood of *Fairfax's* Army, and entreats *Father* to leave alle behind, and flee with us into the City. It may yet be done; and we alle share her Feares.

Saturday  
even.

Packing up in greate haste, after a confused Family Council, wherein some fresh Accounts of the Rebels' Advances, broughte in by *Diggory*, made my Father the sooner consent to a stolen Flight into *Oxford*, *Diggory* being left behind in Charge. Time for Flight, tomorrow after Dark, the *Puritans* being busie at their Sermons. The better the Day, the better the Deede.—*Heaven* make it soe!

Tuesday.

*Oxford*; in most confined and unpleasant

pleasant Lodgings; but noe Matter; manie better and richer than ourselves fare worse, and our King hath not where to lay his Head. 'Tis sayd he hath turned his Course towarde *Scotland*. There are Souldiers in this House, whose Noise distracts us. Alsoe, a poor Widow Lady, whose Husband hath been slayne in these Wars. The Children have taken a feverish Complaynt, and require incessant tending. Theire Beds are far from cleane, in too little Space, and ill aired.

1646.

The Widow Lady goes about visiting the Sick, and would faine have my Companie. The streets have displeased me, being soe fulle of Men; however, in a close Hoode, I have accompanied her sundrie Times. 'Tis a good Soul, and full of pious Works and Almsdeedes.

May 20.

*Diggory* hath found his Way to us, alle dismaied, and bringing Dismay with him, for the Rebels have taken and ransacked our House, and turned him forthe.

May 27.

“ A

1646.

“A Plague on these Wars!” as *Father* says. What are we to doe, or how live, despoyled of alle? *Father* hath lost, one Way and another, since the Civil War broke out, three thousand Pounds, and is now nearlie beggared. *Mother* weeps bitterlie, and *Father’s* Countenance hath fallen more than ever I saw it before. “Nine Children!” he exclaimed just now; “and onlie one provided for!” His Eye fell upon me for a Moment, with less Tendernesse than usual, as though he wished me in *Aldersgate Street*. I’m sure I wish I were there,—not because *Father* is in Misfortune; oh, no!

June.

The Parliament requireth our unfortunate King to issue Orders to this and alle his other Garrisons, commanding theire surrender; and *Father* finding this is likelie to take Place forthwith, is busied in having himself comprised within the Articles of Surrender. ’Twill be hard indeede, shoulde this be denied.

His

His Estate lying in the King's Quarters, how could he doe less than adhere to his Majesty's Partie during this unnaturall War? I am sure *Mother* grudged the Royalists everie Goose and Turkey they had from our Yard.

1646.

Praised be *Heaven*, deare *Father* hath just received Sir *Thomas Fairfax's* Protection, empowering him quietlie and without let to goe forthe "with Servants, "Horses, Arms, Goods, etc." to "*London* "or elsewhere," whithersoever he will. And though the Protection extends but over six Months, at the Expiry of which Time *Father* must take Measures to embark for some Place of Refuge beyond Seas, yet who knows what may turn up in those six Months! The King may enjoy his Owne agayn. Meantime, we immediatelie leave *Oxford*.

June 26.

*Forest Hill.*

At Home agayn; and what a Home!  
Everie thing

1646.

Everieting to seeke, everieting misplaced, broken, abused, or gone altogether! The Gate off its Hinges! the Stone Balls of the Pillars overthrowne, the great Bell stolen, the clipt Junipers grubbed up, the Sun-diall broken! Not a Hen or Chicken, Duck or Duckling, left! *Crab* half-starved, and soe glad to see us, that he dragged his Kennel after him. *Daisy* and *Blanch* making such piteous Moans at the Paddock Gate, that I coulde not bear it, but helped *Lettice* to milk them. Within Doores, everie Room smelling of Beer and Tobacco; Cupboards broken open, etc. On my Chamber Floor, a greasy steeple-crowned Hat! Threw it forthe from the Window with a Pair of Tongs.

*Mother* goes about the House weeping. *Father* sits in his broken Arm-chair, the Picture of Disconsolateness. I see the *Agnews*, true Friends! riding hither; and with them a Third, who, methinks, is *Rose's* brother *Ralph*.

*London.*



*London. St. Martin's le Grand.*

1646.

Trembling, weeping, hopefull, dis-  
maied, here I sit in mine Uncle's hired  
House, alone in a Crowd, scared at  
mine owne Precipitation, readie to wish  
myselfe back, unable to resolve, to  
reflect, to pray . . . .

Alle is silent; even in the latelie  
busie Streets. Why art thou cast down,  
my Heart? Why art thou disquieted  
within me? Hope thou stille in the  
*Lord*, for He is the Joy and Light of thy  
Countenance. Thou hast beene long  
of learning Him to be such. Oh, for-  
get not thy Lesson now! Thy best  
Friend hath sanctioned, nay, coun-  
selled this Step, and overcome alle  
Obstacles, and provided the Means  
of this Journey; and to-morrow at  
Noone, if Events prove not cross, I  
shall have Speech of him whom my  
Soul loveth. To-night, let me watch,  
fast, and pray.

Twelve at  
Night.

How

1646.  
Friday, at  
Night.

How awfulle it is to beholde a Man weepe ! mine owne Tears, when I think thereon, well forthe . . . .

*Rose* was a true Friend when she sayd, “ Our prompt Affections are oft our wise Counsellors.” Soe she suggested and advised alle ; wrung forthe my Father’s Consent, and sett me on my Way, even putting Money in my Purse. Well for me, had she beene at my Journey’s End as well as its Beginning !

’Stead of which, here was onlie mine Aunt ; a slow, timid, uncertayn Soule, who proved but a broken Reed to lean upon.

Soe, alle I woulde have done arighte went crosse, the Letter never delivered, the Message delayed till he had left Home, soe that methought I shoulde goe crazie.

While the Boy, stammering in his lame Excuses, bore my chafed Reproaches the more humblie because he saw he had done me some grievous Hurt, though  
he

he knew not what, a Voice in the adjacent Chamber in Alternation with mine Uncle's, drove the Blood of a suddain from mine Heart, and then sent it back with impetuous Rush, for I knew the Accents right well.

Enters mine Aunt, alle flurried, and hushing her Voice. "Oh, *Niece*, he "whom you wot of is here, but knoweth "not you are at Hand, nor in *London*. "Shall I tell him?"

But I gasped, and held her back by her Skirts; then, with a suddain secret Prayer, or Cry, or maybe, Wish, as'twere, darted up unto Heaven for Assistance, I took noe Thought what I shoulde speak when confronted with him, but opening the Door between us, he then standing with his Back towards it, rushed forth and to his Feet—there sank, in a Gush of Tears; for not one Word coulde I proffer, nor soe much as look up.

A quick Hand was laid on my Head, on my Shoulder—as quicklie removed  
and

1646.

. . . . . and I was aware of the Door being hurriedlie opened and shut, and a Man hasting forthe; but 'twas onlie mine Uncle. Meantime, my Husband, who had at first uttered a suddain Cry or Exclamation, had now left me, sunk on the Ground as I was, and retired a Space, I know not whither, but methinks he walked hastilie to and fro. Thus I remained, agonized in Tears, unable to recal one Word of the humble Appeal I had pondered on my Journey, or to have spoken it; though I had known everie Syllable by Rote; yet not wishing myself, even in that Suspense, Shame, and Anguish, elsewhere than where I was cast, at mine Husband's Feet.

Or ever I was aware, he had come up, and caught me to his Breast: then, holding me back soe as to look me in the Face, sayd, in Accents I shall never forget,—

“ Much I coulde say to reproach, but  
 “ will not! Henceforth, let us onlie re-  
 “ call

“ call this darke Passage of our deeplie  
 “ sinfull Lives, to quicken us to *God's*  
 “ Mercy in affording us this Re-union.  
 “ Let it deepen our Penitence, enhance  
 “ our Gratitude——”

1646.

Then, suddainlie covering up his Face with his Hands, he gave two or three Sobs ; and for some few Minutes coulde not refrayn himself ; but, when at length he uncovered his Eyes and looked down on me with Goodness and Sweetnesse, 'twas like the Sun's cleare shining after Raine. . . . .

Shall I now destroy the disgraceful Records of this blotted Book ? I think not ; for 'twill quicken me perhaps, as my Husband sayth, to “ deeper Penitence “ and stronger Gratitude,” shoulde I henceforthe be in Danger of settling on the Lees, and forgetting the deepe Waters which had nearlie closed over mine Head. At present, I am soe joyfull, soe light of Heart under the Sense  
 of

1646.

of Forgivenesse, that it seemeth as though Sorrow coulde lay hold of me noe more; and yet we are still, as 'twere, disunited for awhile; for my Husband is agayn shifting House, and preparing to move his increased Establishment into *Barbican*, where he hath taken a goodly Mansion; and, until it is ready, I am to abide here. I might pleasantlie cavill at this; but, in Truth, will cavill at Nothing now.

I am, by this, fully persuaded that *Ralph's* Tale concerning Miss *Davies* was a false Lie; though, at the Time, supposing it to have some Colour, it inflamed my Jealousie noe little. The cross Spight of that Youth led, under his Sister's Management, to an Issue his Malice never forecast; and now, though I might come at the Truth for Inquiry, I will not soe much as even soil my Mind with thinking of it agayn; for there is that Truth in mine Husband's Eyes, which woulde Silence the  
Slanders

Slanders of a hundred Liars. Chafed, irritated, he has beene, soe as to excite the sarcastic Constructions of those who wish him evill; but his Soul, and his Heart, and his Mind require a Flighte beyond *Ralph's* Witt to comprehend; and I know and feel that they are *mine*.

1646.

He hath just led in the two *Phillips's* to me, and left us together. *Ned* lookt at me askance, and held aloof; but deare little *Jack* threw his Arms about me and wept, and I did weep too; seeing the which, *Ned* advanced, gave me his Hand, and finally his Lips, then lookt as much as to say, "Now, Alle's right." They are grown, and are more comely than heretofore, which, in some Measure, is owing to their Hair being noe longer cut strait and short after the Puritanicall Fashion I soe hate, but curled like their Uncle's.

I have writ, not the Particulars, but the Issue of my Journey, unto *Rose*,  
whose

1646.

whose loving Heart, I know, yearns for Tidings. Alsoe, more brieflie unto my Mother, who loveth not Mr. *Milton*.

*Barbican.*

September.

In the Night-Season, we take noe Rest; we search out our Hearts, and commune with our Spiritts, and checque our Sotls' Accounts, before we dare court our Sleep; but in the Day of Happinesse we cut shorte our Reckonings; and here am I, a joyfulle Wife, too proud and busie amid my dailie Cares to have Leisure for more than a brief Note in my *Diarium*, as *Ned* woulde call it. 'Tis a large House, with more Rooms than we can fill, even with the *Phillips's* and their Scholar-mates, olde Mr. *Milton*, and my Husband's Books to boot. I feel Pleasure in being housewifelic; and reape the Benefit of alle that I learnt of this Sorte at *Sheepscote*. Mine Husband's Eyes follow me with Delight; and once, with a perplexed yet pleased  
Smile,



Smile, he sayd to me, "Sweet Wife, "thou art strangelie altered; it seems "as though I have indeede lost 'sweet " "*Moll* ' after alle!"

1646.

Yes, I am indeed changed; more than he knows or coulde believe. And he is changed too. With Payn I perceive a more stern, severe Tone occasionallie used by him; doubtlesse the Cloke assumed by his Griefe to hide the Ruin I had made within. Yet a more geniall Influence is fast melting this away. Agayn, I note with Payn that he complayns much of his Eyes. At First, I observed he rubbed them oft, and dared not mention it, believing that his Tears on account of me, sinfull Soule! had made them smart. Soe, perhaps, they did in the first Instance, for it appears they have beene ailing ever since the Year I left him; and Over-studdy, which my Presence mighte have prevented, hath conduced to the same ill Effect. Whenever he now looks at a  
lighted

1646.

lighted Candle, he sees a Sort of Iris alle about it ; and, this Morning, he disturbed me by mentioning that a total Darknesse obscured everie Thing on the left Side of his left Eye, and that he even feared, sometimes, he might eventuallie lose the Sight of both. “ In which Case,” he cheerfully sayd, “ you, deare Wife, must “ become my Lecturer as well as Amanu- “ ensis, and content yourself to read to “ me a World of Crabbed Books, in “ Tongues that are not nor neede ever “ be yours, seeing that a Woman has “ ever enough of her owne ! ”

Then, more pensivelie, he added, “ I “ discipline and tranquillize my mind on “ this subject, ever remembering, when “ the Apprehension afflicts me, that, as “ Man lives not by Bread alone, but by “ everie Word that proceeds out of the “ Mouth of *God*, so Man likewise lives “ not by *Sight* alone, but by Faith in the “ Giver of Sight. As long, therefore, as “ it shall please Him to prolong, how- “ ever

“ ever imperfectlie, this precious Gift,  
 “ soe long will I lay up Store agaynst  
 “ the Dayes of Darknesse, which may be  
 “ manie ; and whensoever it shall please  
 “ Him to withdrawe it from me alto-  
 “ gether, I will cheerfully bid mine Eyes  
 “ keep Holiday, and place my Hand  
 “ trustfullie in His, to be led whither-  
 “ soever He will, through the Remainder  
 “ of Life.”

1646.

A Honeymoon cannot for ever last ;  
 nor Sense of Danger, when it long hath  
 past ;—but one little Difference from  
 out manie greater Differences between  
 my late happie Fortnighte in *St Mar-  
 tin's-le-Grand*, and my present dailie  
 Course in *Barbican*, hath marked the  
 Distinction between Lover and Husband.  
 There it was, “ sweet *Moll*,” “ my Heart's  
 “ Life of Life,” “ my dearest cleaving  
 “ Mischief ;” here 'tis onlie “ Wife,”  
 “ Mistress *Milton*,” or at most “ deare ”  
 or “ sweet Wife.” This, I know, is  
 masterfulle and seemly.

Onlie,

1646.

Onlie, this Morning, chancing to quote  
one of his owne Lines,

*These Things may startle well, but  
not astounde,—*

he said, in a Kind of Wonder, “Why,  
“*Moll*, whence had you that?—Me-  
“thought you hated Versing, as you used  
“to call it. When learnt you to love  
“it?” I hung my Head in my old  
foolish Way, and answered, “Since I  
“learnt to love the Verser.” “Why,  
“this is the best of Alle!” he hastilie  
cried; “Can my sweet Wife be indeede  
“Heart of my Heart and Spirit of my  
“Spirit? I lost, or drove away a Child,  
“and have found a Woman.” There-  
after, he less often wifed me, and I  
found I was agayn sweet *Moll*.

This Afternoon, *Christopher Milton*  
lookt in on us. After saluting me with  
the usual Mixture of Malice and Civil-  
itie in his Looks, he fell into easie Con-  
versation; and presentlie says to his  
Brother

Brother quietlie enough, "I saw a curious Pennyworth at a Book-stall as I came along this Morning." "What was that?" says my Husband, brightening up. "It had a long Name," says *Christopher*,—"I think it was called *Tetrachordon*." My Husband cast at me a suddain, quick Look, but I did not see much as change Colour; and quietlie continued my Sewing.

"I wonder," says he, after a Pause, "that you did not invest a small Portion of your Capitall in the work, as you say 'twas soe greate a Bargain. However, Mr. *Kit*, let me give you one small Hint with alle the good Humour imaginable: don't take Advantage of our neare and deare Relation to make too frequent Opportunities of saying to me anything that would certainlie procure for another Man a Thrashing!"

Then, after a short silence betweene Alle, he suddainlie burst out laughing, and cried, "I know 'tis on the Stalls;  
"I've

1646.

“ I’ve seene it, *Kit*, myself! Oh, had you  
 “ seene, as I did, the Blockheads poring  
 “ over the Title, and hammering at it  
 “ while you might have walked to *Mile*  
 “ *End* and back! ”

“ That’s Fame, I suppose,” says  
*Christopher* drylie; and then goes off to  
 talk of some new Exercise of the Press-  
 licenser’s Authoritie, which he seemed  
 to approve, but it kindled my Husband  
 in a Minute.

“ What Folly! what Nonsense!”  
 cried he, smiting the Table; “ these  
 “ *Jacks* in Office sometimes devise such  
 “ senselesse Things that I really am  
 “ ashamed of being of their Party.  
 “ License, indeede!—their License! I  
 “ suppose they will shortly license the  
 “ Length of *Moll’s* Curls, and regulate  
 “ the Colour of her Hoode, and forbid  
 “ the Larks to sing within Sounde of  
 “ *Bow Bells*, and the Bees to hum o’  
 “ *Sundays*. Methoughte I had broken  
 “ *Mabbot’s* Teeth two Years ago; but  
 “ I

“ I must bring forthe a new Edition of my  
 “ *Areopagitica* ; and I'll put your Name  
 “ down, *Kit*, for a hundred Copies! ”

1646.

Though a Rusticall Life hath ever had  
 my Suffrages, Nothing can be more  
 pleasant than our regular Course. We  
 rise at five or sooner: while my Husband  
 combs his Hair, he commonly hums or  
 sings some Psalm or Hymn, versing it,  
 maybe, as he goes on. Being drest, *Ned*  
 reads him a chapter in the *Hebrew*  
 Bible. With *Ned* stille at his Knee,  
 and me by his Side, he expounds and  
 improves the Same; then, after a shorte,  
 heartie Prayer, releases us both. Before  
 I have finished my Dressing, I hear him  
 below at his Organ, with the two Lads,  
 who sing as well as Choristers, hymning  
 Anthems and *Gregorian* Chants, now  
 soaring up to the Clouds, as 'twere, and  
 then dying off as though some wide  
 echoing Space lay betweene us. I  
 usuallie find Time to tie on my Hoode  
 and

October.

1646.

and slip away to the Herb-market for a Bunch of fresh Radishes or Cresses, a Sprig of Parsley, or at the leaste a Posy, to lay on his Plate. A good wheaten Loaf, fresh Butter and Eggs, and a large Jug of Milk, compose our simple Breakfast; for he likes not, as my Father, to see Boys hacking a huge Piece of Beef, nor cares for heavie feeding, himselfe. Onlie, olde Mr. *Milton* sometimes takes a Rasher of toasted Bacon, but commonly a Basin of Furmity, which I prepare more to his Minde than the Servants can.

After Breakfast, I well know the Boys' Lessons will last till Noone. I therefore goe to my Closett Duties, after my *Forest Hill* Fashion; thence to Market, buy what I neede, come Home, look to my Maids, give forthe needfulle Stores, then to my Needle, my Books, or perchance to my Lute, which I woulde faine play better. From twelve to one is the Boys' Hour of Pastime; and it may generallie be sayd, my Husband's  
and



and mine too. He draws aside the green Curtain,—for we sit mostly in a large Chamber shaped like the letter T, and thus divided while at our separate Duties : my End is the pleasantest, has the Sun most upon it, and has a Balcony overlooking a Garden. At one, we dine ; always on simple, plain Dishes, but drest with Neatnesse and Care. Olde Mr. *Milton* sits at my right Hand, and says Grace ; and, though growing a little deaf, enters into alle the livelie Discourse at Table. He loves me to help him to the tenderest, by Reason of his Losse of Teeth. My Husband careth not to sitt over the Wine ; and hath noe sooner finished the Cheese and Pippins than he reverts to the Viol or Organ, and not onlie sings himself, but will make me sing too, though he sayth my Voice is better than my Ear. Never was there such a tunefulle Spiritt. He alwaies tears himself away at laste, as with a Kind of Violence, and returns to  
his

1646.

1646.

his Books at six o' the Clock. Meantime, his old Father dozes, and I sew at his Side.

From six to eight, we are seldom without Friends, chance Visitants, often scholarlike and witty, who tell us alle the News, and remain to partake a light Supper. The boys enjoy this Season as much as I doe, though with Books before them, their Hands over their Ears, pretending to con the Morrow's Tasks. If the Guests chance to be musicalle, the Lute and Viol are broughte forthe, to alternatē with Roundelay and Madrigal: the old Man beating Time with his feeble Fingers, and now and then joining with his quavering Voice. (By the Way, he hath not forgotten to this Hour my imputed Crime of losing that Song by *Harry Lawes*: my Husband takes my Part, and sayth it will turn up some Day when leaste expected, like *Justinian's Pandects*.) *Hubert* brings him his Pipe and a Glass of Water, and then

I crave his Blessing and goe to Bed ;  
first, praying ferventlie for alle beneathe  
this deare Roof, and then for alle at  
*Sheepscote* and *Forest Hill*.

1646.

On Sabbaths, besides the publick  
Ordinances of Devotion, which I cannot,  
with alle my striving, bring myself to  
love like the Services to which I have  
beene accustomed, we have much Read-  
ing, Singing, and Discoursing among  
ourselves. The Maids sing, the Boys  
sing, *Huberts* sings, olde *Mr. Milton* sings ;  
and trulie with soe much of it, I woulde  
sometimes as lief have them quiete.  
The *Sheepscote* Sundays suited me better.  
The Sabbath Exercise of the Boys is to  
read a Chapter in the *Greek* Testament,  
heare my Husband expounde the same ;  
and write out a System of Divinitie as  
he dictates to them, walking to and fro.  
In listening thereto, I find my Pleasure  
and Profit.

I have alsoe my owne little Catechising  
after a humbler Sorte, in the Kitchen,  
and

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and some poore Folke to relieve and console, with my Husband's Concurrence and Encouragement. Thus, the Sabbath is devoutliè and happilie passed.

My Husband alsoe takes, once in a Fortnighte or soe, what he blythelie calls "a gaudy Day," equallie to his owne Content, the Boys', and mine. On these Occasions, it is my Province to provide colde Fowls or Pigeon Pie, which *Hubert* carries, with what else we neede, to the Spot selected for our Camp Dinner. Sometimes we take Boat to *Richmond* or *Greenwich*. Two young Gallants, Mr. *Alphrey* and Mr. *Miller*, love to joyn our partie, and toil at the Oar, or scramble up the Hills, as merrilie as the Boys. I must say they deal savagelie with the Pigeon Pie afterwards. They have as wild Spiritts as our *Dick* and *Harry*, but withal a most wonderfulle Reverence for my Husband, whome they courte to read and recite, and provoke to pleasant Argument, never prolonged  
to

to Wearinesse, and seasoned with Frolic, Jest, and Witt. Olde Mr. *Milton* joyns not these Parties. I leave him alwaies to *Dolly's* Care, firste providing for him a Sweetbread or some smalle Relish, such as he loves. He is in Bed ere we return, which is oft by Moonlighte.

164<sup>r</sup>.

How soon must Smiles give Way to Tears! Here is a Letter from deare *Mother*, taking noe Note of what I writ to her, and for good Reason, she is soe distraught at her owne and deare *Father's* ill Condition. The Rebels (I must call them such) have soe stripped and opprest them, they cannot make their House tenantable; nor have Aught to feede on, had they e'en a whole Roof over their Heads. The Neighbourhoode is too hot to holde them; olde Friends cowardlie and suspicious, olde and new Foes in League together. Leave *Oxon* they must; but where to go? *Father*, despite his broken Health and Hatred of the Foreigner, must needes depart beyond Seas;

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Seas ; at leaste within the six Months ; but how, with an emptie Purse, make his Way in a strange Land, with a Wife and seven Children at his Heels ? Soe ends *Mother* with a “ *Lord* have Mercy “ upon us ! ” as though her House were as surelie doomed to Destruction as if it helde the Plague.

Mine Eyes were yet swollen with Tears, when my Husband stept in. He askt, “ What ails you, precious Wife ? ” I coulde but sigh, and gave him the Letter. Having read the Same, he says, “ But what, my dearest ? Have “ we not ample Room here for them alle ? “ I speak as to Generalls, you must care “ for Particulars, and stow them as you “ will. There are plenty of small Rooms “ for the Boys ; but, if your Father, “ being infirm, needes a Ground-floor “ Chamber, you and I will mount aloft.”

I coulde but look my Thankfullnesse and kiss his Hand. “ Nay,” he added, with increasing Gentlenesse, “ think not

“ I

“ I have seene your Cares for my owne  
 “ Father without loving and blessing  
 “ you. Let Mr. *Powell* come and see  
 “ us happie ; it may tend to make him  
 “ soe. Let him and his abide with us,  
 “ at the least till the Spring : his Lads  
 “ will Studdy and play with mine, your  
 “ Mother will help you in your House-  
 “ wiferie, the two olde Men will  
 “ chirp together beside the *Christmasse*  
 “ Hearth ; and, if I find thy Weeklie  
 “ Bills the heavier, ’twill be but to write  
 “ another Book, and make a better Bar-  
 “ gain for it than I did for the last.  
 “ We will use Hospitalitie without  
 “ grudging ; and as for your owne In-  
 “ crease of Cares, I suppose ’twill be but  
 “ to order two Legs of Mutton insteade  
 “ of one ! ”

And soe with a Laugh, left me, most  
 joyfuller happy Wife ! to drawe Sweete  
 out of Sowre, Delighte out of Sorrowe ;  
 and to summon mine own Kindred  
 aboute me, and wipe away their Tears,  
 bid

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bid them eat, drink, and be merry, and shew myself to them, how proud, how cherished a Wife !

Surelie my Mother will learne to love *John Milton* at last ! If she doth not, this will be my secret Crosse, for 'tis hard to love dearlie two Persons who esteeme not one another. But she will, she must, not onlie respect him for his Uprightnesse and Magnanimitie, coupled with what himselfe calls "an honest Haughtinesse" and Self-esteeme," but *like* him for his kind and equall Temper, (*not* "harsh" and crabbed," as I have hearde her call it,) his easie Flow of Mirthe, his Manners unaffectedlie cheerfulle ; his Voice, musically ; his Person, beautifull ; his Habitt, gracefull ; his Hospitalitie, naturall to him ; his Purse, Countenance, Time, Trouble, at his Friend's Service ; his Devotion, humble ; his forgivenessse, heavenlie ! May it please *God* that my Mother shall like *John Milton* ! . . .

F I N I S .



## NOTES.

### THE POWELLS' FAMILY MANSION.

The old Manor-house of the Powells was pulled down in 1854. The following account of it in 1851 will be found in "Impressions of England," by the Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe, rector of Christ Church, Baltimore :—

" It presents the remains of a much larger house ; but, even in its reduced-dimensions, is quite sufficient for a comfortable farmer. Still the rose, the sweetbriar, and the eglantine are redolent beneath its casements ; the cock at the barn-door may be seen from any of its windows ; and doubtless the barn itself is the very one in which the shadowy flail of Robin Goodfellow threshed all night, to earn his bowl of cream. In the house itself we were received by the farmer's daughter, who looked like the ' neat-handed Phillis ' herself, although her accomplishments were by no means those of a rustic maiden, for she had evidently entered fully into the spirit of the place, and imbued herself with that of the poetry in no mean degree. We were indebted to her for the most courteous reception, and were conducted by her into several apartments of the house, concerning all of which she was able to converse very intelligently. In the kitchen, with its vast hearth and overhanging chimney, we discovered tokens of the good living for which the old Manor-house was no doubt famous in its day ;

i. and in its floor was a large stone, said to have been removed from a room now destroyed, which was the poet's study.

“The garden, in its massive wall, ornamented gateway, and an old sun-dial, retains some trace of its manorial dignities in former times;—when the maiden Mary sat in her bower thinking of her inspired lover; or when perchance the runaway wife sighed and wept over a letter brought by the post, commanding Mistress Milton to return to her duty in a dark corner of London . . . .

“Our fair conductress next called our attention to an outhouse, now degraded to the office of domestic brewing, . . . . and in proof of the nobler office to which it had been originally designed, she pointed out the remains of old *pargetting*, or ornamented plaster-work, in its gables.”

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#### FOREST HILL CHURCH.

ii. The following passage precedes the above:—  
 “And now we came to the little church of Forest Hill, where, for aught I know, Milton was married to the daughter of the good old cavalier; but where he could not have been surrounded by a very great crowd of rejoicing friends upon the occasion, as the sacred place will scarcely contain threescore persons at a time. It has no tower” (*see vignette*), “but only one of these pretty little gable-cots for the bell, so familiar of late in our own” (American) “improving architecture of country churches. The altar window is near the road, and the bell-gable is

at the other extremity, surmounting the slope of the land, on a pretty terrace of which stands the parsonage. The little Church itself is of the early English period, but has repairs in almost every variety of pointed style, and some in no style at all. It has had very little aid from the builder, however, for nearly a century. In the early Caroline period, or a little before the date of Milton's marriage, it was probably new-roofed and put into good order, possibly as the result of injunctions from the King and Council, with some of whom 'the filthy lying of Churches' was not reckoned a proof of growing godliness in the nation. Accordingly I noticed, on one of the tie-beams of the roof, the inscription C. 1630 R.—and again, on the door, C. R. 1635. In the churchyard is a remarkably fine holly-tree; and, what is still more interesting, the grave of Mickle, the translator of the "Lusiad." Here he lies, ignorant alike that his "Lusiad" is forgotten, and that his little ballad of Cumnor Hall has reproduced itself in the world-famous story of Kenilworth. We ventured to call at the parsonage, where we were very courteously shown the parish register, a little old parchment book, in which I observed the record of Mary Powell's christening; and also the record of burial of persons brought in after such and such a night in the Civil Wars.

"In a nice little cottage hard by we found an old dame teaching half-a-dozen children; and if any one marvels at my mentioning so insignificant a fact, let me say that it was one of the most pleasing of my day's adventures to visit this school, which seemed to be the original of many a queer cut, familiar from the painted story-books of the nursery. The cottage seemed to contain but one

II.

II.

room, the dame's bed being turned up against the wall, and neatly concealed by a check curtain. The windows were casements with diamond panes; and the walls were so thick that the window-sill afforded space for several boxes of plants, set there for the sunlight. The floor was so neat that it might have served for a table. . . . Sundry shelves shone with polished pewter and tin; the white-wash, without and within, was fresh and sweet; and sundry vines were trained about the door. The little scholars, evidently the children of labouring people, were tidy in their appearance too; and they sat, each upon his stool, with A B C book held demurely before the nose, and eyes asquint at the visitors. Everything convinced me that the old dame was a strict disciplinarian, whose moral suasion consisted in the rod of Solomon, fairly displayed before the eyes of the urchins, and, no doubt, faithfully used.

"Hard by the dame's cottage I found a spring, over-arched with substantial masonry, and adorned with ivy. I suggested that John Milton had certainly tasted of that water, for the well was antique, and evidently designed for the use of a gentleman's household; to which Sir C—, who is a judge of such matters, at once assented; pronouncing it of the period of Mary Powell's youth, and paying my discovery the practical compliment of producing his sketch-book and drawing it on the spot. A similar drawing he also made of the Powell house itself, to which we now proceeded. . . .

"Next morning, when I met Sir C— at breakfast, he startled me by throwing on the table two accurate and beautiful drawings of the well and mansion of Forest Hill. He had produced them

from the little sketches which I had seen him take upon the spot; and as they must have been made either very late at night or very early in the morning, they were pleasing proofs of his kind disposition to gratify and oblige me, by the gift of a memorial of our Miltonian day."—*Ibid.*

II.

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### THE REGISTER.

As it hardly admits of doubt that Milton married Mary Powell at her own parish church, it is singular that no mention of it is found in the above-mentioned register. Some years ago I requested the Rev. C. F. Wyatt, incumbent of Forest Hill, to send me a copy of the entry. In reply, he wrote—

III,

"I enclose a copy of Mary Powell's baptism. No other mention is made of her in the register. If her marriage took place at Forest Hill, the entry was omitted, for the leaves of the register of that period seem perfect. The remains of the Manor-house were taken down in 1854, and a new farm-house built."

The following is the entry in the register:—

"Mary Powell the daughter of Richard Powell baptized the the (sic) 28th day of Januarie, 1625."

She must therefore have been eighteen when she married.

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THE OLD PAPER-ROOM IN THE MANOR HOUSE.

IV.

Warton says (1785): "Mr. Powell's mansion still remains; in which Mr. Mickle, the ingenious translator of the "Lusiad," lately made a search, with a view of finding some of Milton's letters or papers. There is an old paper-room or deserted study in the house, where are many obsolete family writings, with letters to and from Mr. Powell, who was a great Royalist in the Rebellion. One of the letters is a requisition dated about 1645, from Sir Thomas Glemham, governor of Oxford garrison, and late a gentleman-commoner of Trinity College, to Mr. Powell to send a large quantity of winnowed wheat into the city of Oxford, then besieged. At length he discovered a small paper book, in which were written four or five poems, of the handwriting of about the close of the reign of James the First. One of them is the copy of a well-known old English ballad. The rest I never saw before. Some of them have considerable merit, but none seem to be the composition of Milton. It is, however, likely they were left there in consequence of Milton's intercourse and connexion with the family.

"The Powells were sharers of abbey-land in Oxfordshire. They were seated in the dissolved monastery of Sandford, near Oxford; and one of them built the Gothic manorial stone house now standing in that village, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth."—*Thomas Warton's Notes to Milton's Minor Poems*, 1785.

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## THE DEBT OF FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS.

That the fortune of Mary Powell's mother was three thousand pounds—that the Powells had nine children—that Mr. Powell was indebted to Mr. Milton for five hundred pounds, the bond for which was never cancelled—may be verified in Todd's Life of Milton.

V.

## THE BROW OF THE HILL.

The view from this upland in the neighbourhood of the Powells' residence is charmingly described in one of the Letters of Sir William Jones, who noticed most of the rural images in "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" in the landscape around it.

VI.

Milton, exchanging St. Bride's Churchyard for such a scene, may well have described his remembered feelings in those beautiful lines :—

As one who, long in populous city pent,  
Where houses thick, and sewers annoy the air,  
Forth issuing, on a summer's day to breathe  
Among the pleasant villages and farms  
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,  
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,  
Or dairy—each rural sight, each rural sound—  
If chance with nymph-like step fair maiden pass,  
What pleasing seemed, thro' her now pleases more—  
*She most ; and in her look sums all delight.*

*Paradise Lost.*

## MILTON'S PORTRAITS.

Milton himself has complained of the unlike likeness of him prefixed to one of his works. The many portraits of him are so unlike one another that they could not all be like him.

VII.

VII.

Warton speaks of a miniature of Milton, taken when he was young, in the possession of the Duchess of Portland. He says: "The face has a stern thoughtfulness; and, to use his own expression, is 'severe in youthful beauty.'"

An admirable crayon likeness of him, at the age of sixty-two, was taken by Faithorne. About the year 1725, Vertue carried this drawing, with other reputed likenesses of Milton, to his daughter Deborah, and spread them before her, as if by accident, while talking to her. Directly she saw Faithorne's drawing,—taking no notice of the rest,—she exclaimed, "Oh Lord, that is the picture of my father! How came you by it?" And stroking down the hair on her forehead, she added, "Just so my father wore his hair!" She told Vertue that "her father was of fair complexion, a little red on his cheeks, and light brown lank hair." She was considered very like him.

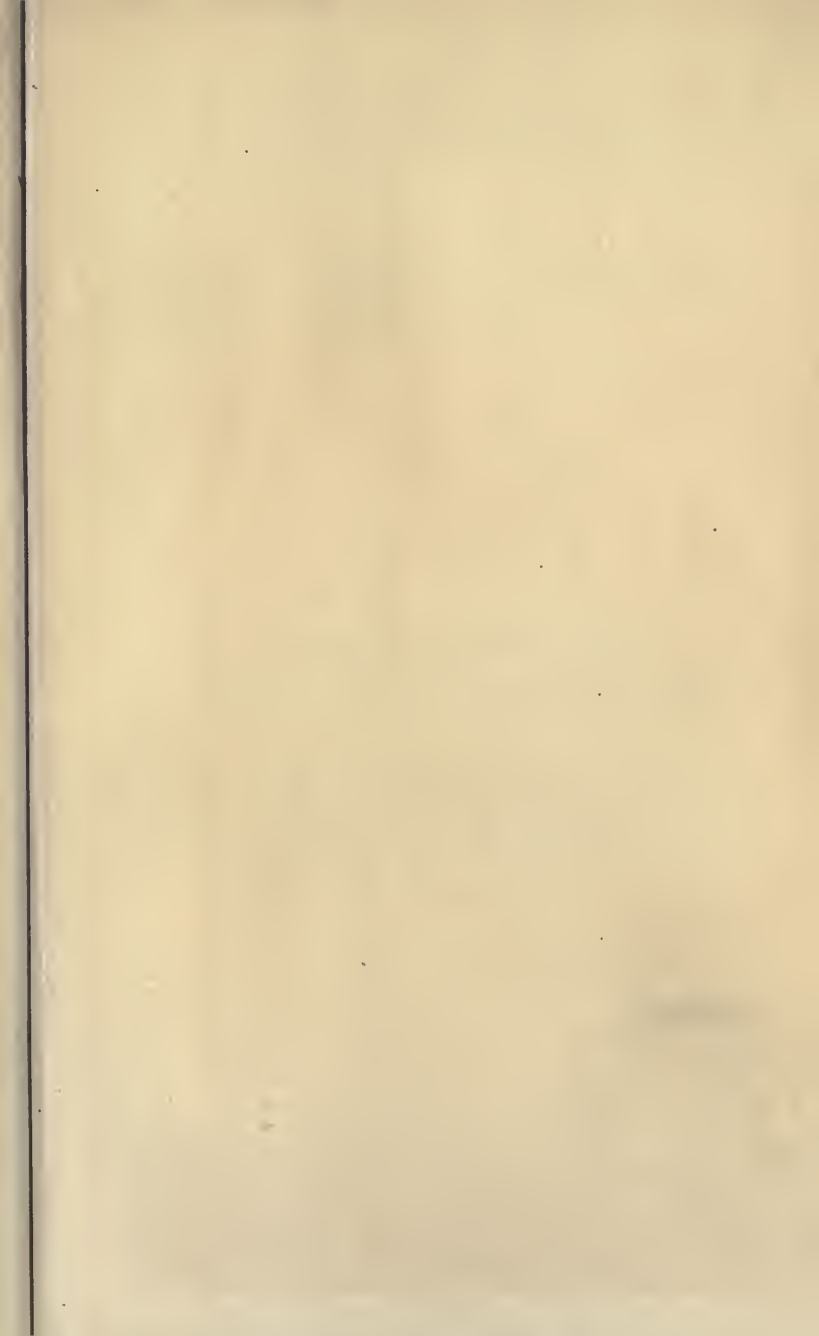
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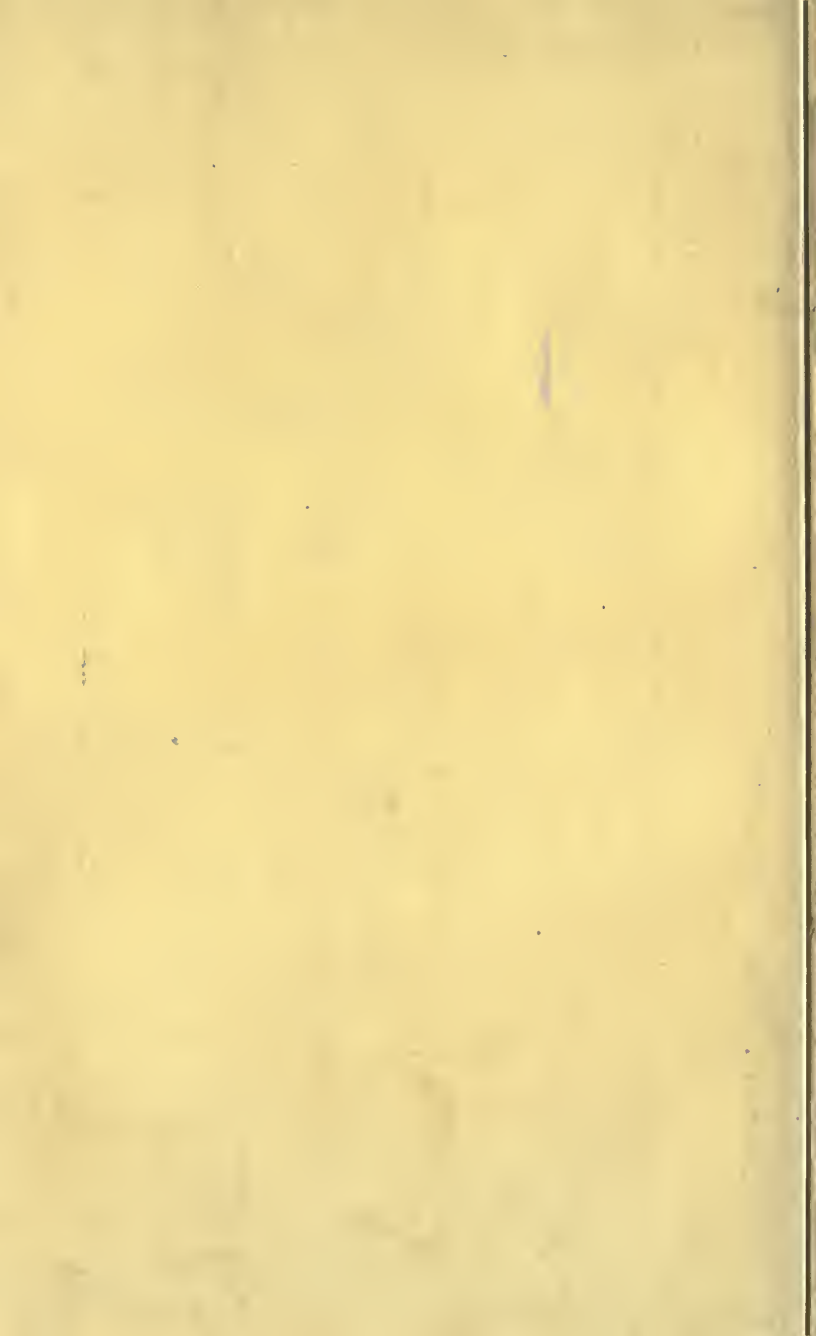
#### MILTON'S FATHER.

VIII.

Milton's father was bred a scholar and of Christ Church, Oxford. He was disinherited by his father for abjuring the Romish faith; and became a scrivener in consequence. He was a fine musician; and composed an *In nomine* in forty parts, for which a Polish prince honoured him with a gold chain and medal. He also composed many psalm tunes, one of which, called York Tune, was such a favourite as to be used by nurses for a lullaby, and as a chime-tune for church bells.







PR            [Manning, Anne]  
4974           The maiden & married life  
ML8M35       of Mary Powell  
1874

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